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THREE BOYS IN ARMOR.

BY TUDOR JENKS.

UNTIL two years after Queen Victoria was crowned there never had been a photograph of the human face. In 1839 the first such photograph was taken by Professor John W. Draper, of New York City.

Before that date and until after 1750, those who wished portraits must pay an artist for a painting or drawing, and only a few could afford such a luxury. About 1759, silhouettes were in fashion; and some of you may not know that these black profiles were named after a French minister of finance. Because he was said to be stingy, it was considered a good joke to speak of cheap things as being *à la Silhouette*; and these black-paper portraits being cheap, they received the minister's name.

Since great artists charged very high prices, only the great and rich could be painted by the masters; and as their pictures were carefully preserved, the fine portraits of other days usually represent only the nobles and wealthy, such as kings, queens, princes, generals, and great statesmen.

It is natural, then, that the children whose faces have been made known to us by the distinguished painters should be little folks of high degree—or the sons and daughters of the artists, whose pictures were painted for nothing! These old-time boys and girls are dressed in garments like those their parents wore, for special fashions for children's wear came at a later time.

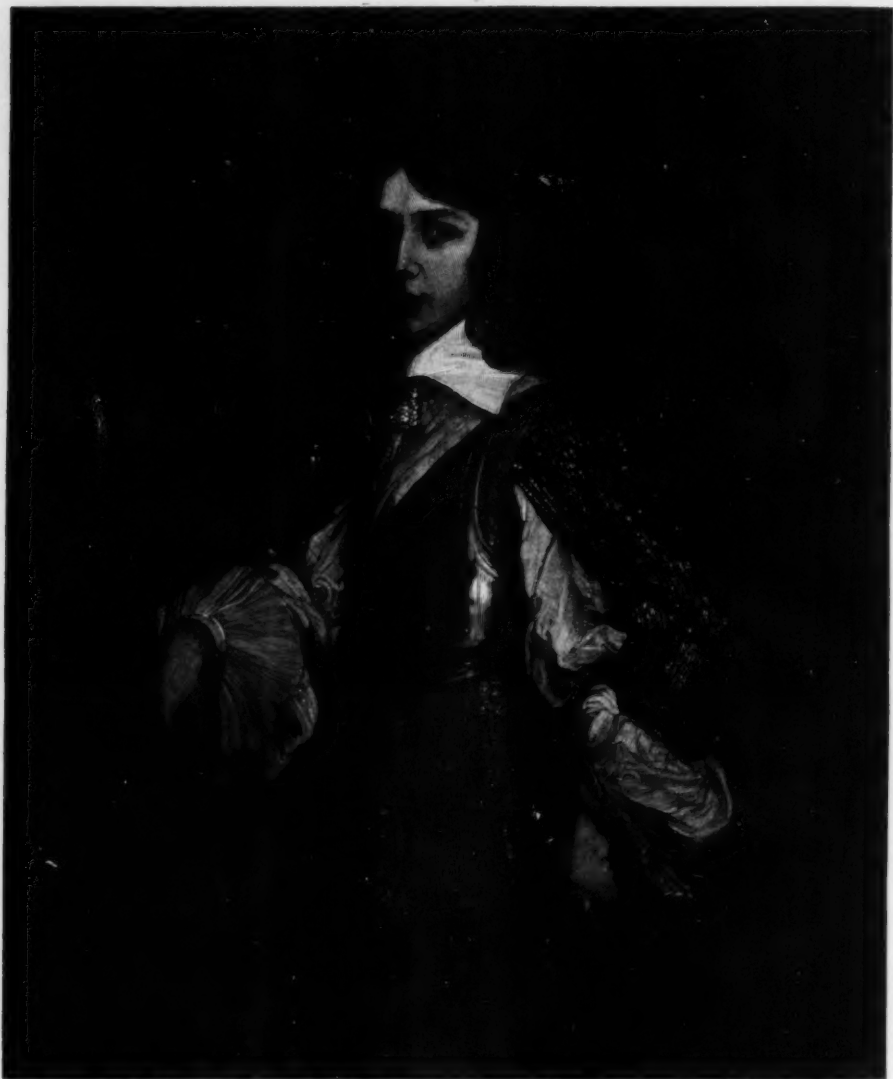
With this article are shown engravings made from three celebrated paintings, representing three boys, one English, one Dutch, and the other Spanish. They all lived at about the same period. Their names are Charles Stuart, who became Charles II., King of England—the “Merry Monarch”; William of Nassau, son of Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange; and Carlos Balthazar, son of Philip IV., King of Spain. They were princes, all three, and the nations to which they belonged were rivals for supremacy upon the sea. First Spain's navy was the strongest, then the Dutch came to the fore, and finally England took the lead—and the British navy holds the supremacy to-day.

The Spanish Infante, or Prince, was painted by Velasquez; the English and Dutch boys by Van Dyck. These artists may fairly be ranked with the greatest portrait-painters of the world, so we should feel satisfied that the likenesses are good.

It will increase our interest in the pictures to see what history records about these little nobles. Two of them died comparatively young; the third, Charles Stuart, was king of England for quarter of a century; and many historians consider that it might have been better if he had not outlived the other two.

Let us first speak of the young Spaniard. Except for Velasquez's brush we should know little of this prince, who died in his seventeenth year. But Velasquez seemed to delight in picturing Carlos Balthazar, for, from the time

of the first portrait, showing the royal baby charging at a gallop, is thought by a number of critics to be as wonderful a piece of painting as Velasquez ever accomplished.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO. OF THE PORTRAIT BY VAN DYCK, IN THE HERMITAGE AT ST. PETERSBURG.

WILLIAM II. OF ORANGE.

eyed boy in many poses. He is sometimes in hunting costume, again in armor, now with his dogs, and several times on horseback. One large picture showing the young cavalier

There may have been other reasons why Velasquez painted Prince Carlos so often, besides fondness for the work. King Philip dearly loved the boy, and may have com-



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FREDERICK HOLLYER OF THE PAINTING BY VELASQUEZ, IN THE MUSEE.
DON CARLOS BALTHAZAR, INFANTE OF SPAIN.

manded the paintings. Or, when the question of finding a suitable bride for the prince was under consideration, a number of portraits may have been made to send to foreign courts—for such was the custom of the times, as any attentive student of fairy-tales would know; though, so far as I remember, school-books tell us nothing on the subject.

Carlos was born in 1629; and in Velasquez's portrait of him in his baby-days he is attended by a baby-page hardly older than himself. At six years, a painting shows him in hunting-dress with a gun and dogs; next we see him learning to ride, under the instruction of Duke Olivares, the most celebrated horseman in Spain.

The portrait given here was painted about 1638, when Carlos was nine. He holds in his hand a baton, or staff such as generals and marshals used to carry on the battlefield as a sign of military authority. But this is a plaything,—like his armor,—for the Infante Don Carlos Balthazar never went to war; and, in fact, we are told by one authority that he was "a fat, jolly boy, not intelligent."

But this does not seem just, for certainly the portrait shows a boy who is neither fat nor stupid; and we know that his father had both affection for his son and pride in his accomplishments, especially in his riding. To Don Fernando, an uncle, the king often wrote in praise of the prince's daring and skill; whereupon the admiring uncle would send presents of armor, dogs, and other things that boys, even when princes, find useful.

Once the gift was a pony, described by Don Fernando as a little demon, but he added that the horse would "go like a little dog" after a few cuts with the whip.

In 1645 Don Carlos made a journey to Aragon and Navarre with his father, on business; and we know this because the boy appears in a royal group forming part of the picture "A View of Saragossa," painted by Mazo.

It is odd that artists during their lives are distinguished for painting great personages, but that after a few years these same personages are often remembered solely because they live in the masterpieces of the great artists.

In June, 1646, Don Carlos was betrothed to a daughter of Ferdinand, Emperor of Austria;

but this proposed marriage must have been only a political alliance, for the little prince died in the same year, and Mariana, the same Austrian princess, afterward married the King of Spain himself.

Philip must have grieved sincerely over the loss of his son, for soon after the prince's death he wrote thus to one of his generals, the Marquis of Legañas:

MARQUIS—We must all of us yield to God's will, and I more than others. It has pleased him to take my son from me about an hour ago. Mine is such grief as you can conceive at such a loss, but also full of resignation in the hand of God.

Yet had Prince Carlos lived to ascend the throne he must have reigned in troublous times. Soon after his death Spain was compelled to give up her sovereignty over Portugal, and saw the Netherlands become foremost in power upon the seas. These were proud Spain's dark days, and the Infante Carlos missed little happiness by failing to wear the crown.

Prince William of Nassau, or Orange, was a more attractive young noble—as, indeed, we may judge from Van Dyck's painting; he was brave, energetic, and able, as befitted a kinsman of "William the Silent," whom the Dutch have not shrunk from comparing even with George Washington.

Miss Evelyn S. Foster writes for *St. Nicholas* an account of the young prince, from which the following facts of his life are taken:

The young Dutch prince, born in 1626, inherited some of the best qualities of his distinguished family. He was attractive in person and manners, and his mind was bright. He no doubt often heard the wonderful story of the struggles of the gallant Dutch nation to win independence, and learned of the building and maintenance of the wonderful "dikes and ditches," of their value in peace and war, their importance, and the terrible desolation that would follow even a small defect in their structure. What fascinating stories were his inheritance!—stories to which he must have listened with all a clever boy's interest in adventure and excitement—incidents from the life of "good Father William," as the people fondly called him, tales of heroism that have never been surpassed.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO. OF THE PORTRAIT BY VAN DYCK, IN THE ROYAL GALLERY, WINDSOR CASTLE.
PRINCE CHARLES OF ENGLAND, AFTERWARD KING CHARLES II.

When about sixteen, Prince William visited England; for his parents had arranged for his marriage with the Princess Mary, daughter of King Charles the First of England, and sister of Charles Stuart. The Prince found a warm and kindly welcome at the English court, and while there he made many sincere friends.

He was acquainted with several languages, and was mature beyond his years. The duties which his position demanded he performed with ability and grace.

Some one who lived at that time and heard him speak, wrote: "He has pronounced his little speeches with the best grace, and with

so much good will that he has acquired the love of every one who heard him. I will not say more, but that is not half the truth."

Prince William and Princess Mary were betrothed soon after the prince arrived.

The marriage ceremony at The Hague was performed several years afterward, and Princess Mary became Princess of Orange. The young couple passed some happy years together, and were evidently devoted to each other. When the Prince was stricken with smallpox, although he knew he was dying, he refused the comfort of his young wife's presence lest she also might take the disease.

Before she was twenty, the Princess was a widow; but a son was born to her, and this son of Prince William became king of England, and reigned for years as William III., with his wife Mary, niece of Charles the Second—that is, of the little prince whose portrait is the last of the engravings.

Van Dyck lived many years in England as court painter to Charles I., and the great artist died in London in 1641. He painted the portrait of Prince William before the boy's visit to England—which was, before the prince was sixteen years old. The portrait of Charles Stuart, also by Van Dyck, must have been painted after the coming of the Prince of Orange to England, since Charles was a baby at that time, and the picture shows the prince to be at least seven or eight years old.

Prince Charles was born in 1630, and his later life as Charles II. need not concern us in considering the charming picture Van Dyck painted of him in his boyhood. It will be enough to admit that his reign was one of those that Englishmen would willingly spare from their history. In comparing him with his brother, James II., it has been wittily said, "Charles could see things if he would, and James would if he could." The history of the Restoration may be left by younger readers for later study.

Of Charles's boyhood certain leading facts will enable us to judge. When eight years old

he was recognized as Prince of Wales, and provided with an establishment and attendants of his own; two years later he was allowed to take a seat in the House of Lords to learn to govern his future subjects—which, though he began so young, he never learned to do. At twelve we find him in command of part of the royal forces that were striving to put down the revolution. He narrowly escaped capture by the Roundheads at Edgehill, and besides undergoing the regular hardships of the campaign, had to undergo an attack from the measles during his retreat to Oxford.

When he was fourteen there were negotiations concerning his future marriage; but these came to nothing, as might have been expected, considering the state of things in England and the dismal prospects of the royal cause. His proposed bride was a sister of Prince William of Orange. Two years later, Prince Charles escaped from England, and by way of the Scilly Isles and Jersey made his way to France and Holland.

When Charles the First was beheaded, the young Prince, who was nineteen, was proclaimed king in Ireland and in Edinburgh; but, largely because of Oliver Cromwell and his friends, he did not ascend the throne for eleven years.

In the careers of these "Three Boys in Armor" there is much to pity, little to envy; all lived in times of trouble, anxiety, and distress. They were little else than puppets that danced when statesmen pulled the strings as the fortunes of Spain, Holland, and England seemed to require. One has a feeling of sympathy for these boys as he gazes into their frank young faces. Don Carlos has the happiest face—and, though not stupid, shows least signs of intellect.

It was pleasant to be painted into a masterpiece by Velasquez or Van Dyck: but, after all, one must admit that there are certain advantages in the obscurity of being one citizen of a great republic—even if you must depend on the home camera for immortality.





A May Colloquy

By Mary A Gillette

—
DANDELION, Dandelion, you 're a gay and brilliant blossom,
But you make yourself so common — free to every passer-by."

"I 'm God's humble little star-flower, and He likes to see so many.
Are the stars above too common, scattered over all the sky?"

"Violet, blue Violet, you wear a lovely color;
Why, then, hide in lonely places, and why hang your pretty head?"

"In meek content I wear my blue, and should none else behold me,
The Loving One who made me sees me in my lowly bed."

"O fair Arbutus, you are sweet, but why do you go creeping
In piney woods? Our gardens would be proud of such a guest."

"I bide where Nature leads me: in your gardens I should perish
Of a homesick heart; for oh, I love my woodland haunts the best!"

"Buttercup, ah, Buttercup! all is n't gold that glitters;
Though you hold your head so proudly, you are nothing but a sham."

"I hold up my tiny cup to catch the sunshine and the showers,
And I know the little children love me just for what I am."

DENISE AND NED TOODLES.

BY GABRIELLE E. JACKSON.

[This story was begun in the March number.]

CHAPTER VII.

FARMER SUTTON.

SUCH a vacation was never known — never were skies so blue, breezes so balmy, or rainy days so conspicuous by their absence. No day seemed quite long enough to hold all that was planned for each; and indeed they must have been forty-eight hours long to have enabled the children to carry out all their wild schemes. Pokey soon got used to Ned, even though she could not quite overcome the idea that he knew she was afraid of him, whether he was harnessed or following Denise about the grounds, and that he would roll his eyes at her as he never rolled them at any one else. It really seemed as if both Ned and Tan realized her fear, for if animals ever have a sense of fun, they certainly had. It was a common thing to see Pokey go flying across the lawn with Tan or Ned, and often both, in hot pursuit.

The poor child would fly for her life and they would chase until they overtook her, and then pass by like a whirlwind; manes and tails straight up in the air, and blatting or snorting like wild things. But they never offered to molest her in any way and seemed to consider her running a huge joke.

Pokey usually rushed to an old apple-tree which grew in one corner of the grounds, and, once safe in its low-hanging limbs, breathed a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, Denise, choking with laughter, would call to her to stop running, assuring her that Ned and Tan would not hurt her, and would n't run if she did n't.

"It's all very well to say stop running, but I guess you'd run if you had a great pair of horns flying after you, and that little black villain who just *knows* he can frighten me nearly

to death! Why does n't he chase other people I'd like to know?" asked Pokey.

"It's just because you *do* run. He and Tan often play tag with me, and as soon as you start to run they think they must too; and you *do* look just too funny for anything, and I *can't* help laughing."

"Well, you may laugh all you want to, but I'm going to stay up in this tree, for I know they can't climb it even if they *do* put their feet on that low limb down there and try to. I think it is fine up here, and John was just splendid to fix all these little seats in it. I would rather stay up here and read, than have to run away from wild animals."

"All right," said Denise, "you stay there and read; but don't forget to lock the books in the box, please, when you've done, for John put it up there on purpose for them and covered it all over with oil-cloth so the rain could n't wet them. Now I can go up there and read and not have to carry them back to the house when I have done. I'd rather stay down here in the hammock, and then Ned and Tan can come and see me whenever they want to, and get their old noses rubbed." And Denise stretched herself out for a midsummer day's dream. She had not swung long when a patter of feet over the lawn told her that her mischievous "children" were near at hand, but hastily closing her eyes, she pretended to be sound asleep.

On they came, and slowly approaching the hammock thrust their warm noses very gently into her hands.

She kept perfectly still, and the little creatures stood motionless beside her, quite contented to be near and within reach of their little mistress's stroking fingers. It was a pretty picture, and one which Denise — who is now grown up and has a little Denise of her own — often recalls. She remembers the beautiful summer weather; the pretty house with its attractive grounds;

the old apple-trees on the lawn, with the hammock swinging beneath in their shade, and the little girl lying in it, with a great tan-colored goat at one side, and a little black pony on the other, with their heads in the hammock, and their soft noses within reach of her hand. Sailor and Beauty lay on the grass close by, and, perched in the tree overhead, the little friend in her bright gingham dress looked like some gay fairy. Rather too literary, however, for Pokey was a veritable book-worm, and never happier than when left absolutely alone to read.

Not long after Pokey's arrival, Papa and Mama went on a journey, leaving Denise and Pokey to the care of Aunt Helen, who came to stay during their absence. Denise loved her almost as dearly as she loved her father and mother, and was always delighted when she came, for Auntie indulged her little niece, and was always ready to enter into any plan for her pleasure. Denise used to say she liked "just to look at Aunt Helen; that it made her feel good because she was so pretty." And pretty she certainly was, with her great dark eyes, wavy black hair and pretty white teeth.

Such plans as were made when Aunt Helen was installed as mistress of ceremonies!—tea-parties in the Bird's Nest; long drives with Ned, and little picnics at the end; bathing-parties in the river, with Sailor to act as swimming-master, and Beauty to stand on the shore barking like mad.

But the old saying that "when the cat is away the mice will play" had still to be verified, and these two children would have been more than mortal, had they not entered into some mischief.

One morning Aunt Helen announced that she must run into the city for a few hours, but would surely return by the one-thirty train for luncheon.

"Now, Denise," said she, as she was about to start, "be very careful during my absence. If you need anything, go directly to Mary and she will attend to you. John will harness Ned at nine o'clock, and you and Pokey may take a nice drive. If you want an errand, you may go over the hill to Farmer Sutton's and tell him I am ready for the promised poultry. You will enjoy that, I know; but come directly home."

At nine o'clock Ned was put to the phaeton, and the small maids started.

"We will go over by the mountain road, and come back by the turnpike, so Ned will have all the hills at the start," announced Denise as they started.

"All right," said Pokey, who usually *did* say "all right" to any proposal of Denise's.

About an hour's drive brought them to Farmer Sutton's neat farm. His big, round face beamed with pleasure when he saw them drive into the barnyard; for Denise was a prime favorite of his, and the kind man was never so happy as when loading her phaeton with all the good things his farm would produce. So he hastened to welcome her and to bring forth his possessions, of which there was a bountiful supply; for he had a fine farm and took unusually good care of it. Soon she looked like a vender of fruits; and as for Ned he had eaten apples till he simply could hold no more.

Then the sleek cows had to be visited, the funny little pigs to be fed, and all the live stock inspected and talked about. All this, of course, took time; and just as Denise was beginning to think that Ned's nose should be turned homeward, Farmer Sutton said: "Now, you young ones, come right along o' me, and let Mrs. Sutton fetch up some cold milk out 'n the spring for ye. It's proper good milk, I tell ye, an' ye 'll jist enj'y drinkin' on it"; and he led the way to the dairy.

Mrs. Sutton, a stout, pleasant woman, whose chief happiness lay in ministering to other's comforts, bustled about and soon had two glasses of icy cold milk on her dairy table.

"Now, jist you wait one little minute, dearie, whilst I fly into the butt'ry and git a bite for ye, cause ye must be starvin' after yer drive in the fresh air." And away she hurried, to return with a big blue dish piled high with cookies, crullers, doughnuts, and great slices of pound cake.

"Oh, Mrs. Sutton," cried Denise, "we can't eat *half* that. We should n't be able to stir one step if we did!"

"Never ye mind whether ye eat it all or not. That don't matter a mite. Ye jist tuck it away in your little go-cart out yander, and trot it

along home. Children is allers hungry, 'cordin' to *my* experience."

The children labored earnestly to make Ned's homeward load lighter, and certainly succeeded to an amazing degree, if stowing a large quantity in a small space could help matters. At any rate, the cake plate presented a far less generous appearance half an hour later.

"Now come along o' me, and let me show ye the cunningest live critter ye ever clapped yer brown an' blue eyes on," said their hostess, when she felt convinced that they really could not eat any more. She led the way to the wash-house yard, and as soon as she entered it she was greeted by a funny little bleating.

"Yes, yes, Molly, I be a-comin'," said she to a tiny lamb which was tied to a little tree in the middle of the yard.

Denise and Pokey ran across the grass to see the little snow-ball, for certainly "Molly" looked like nothing else. She was not more than five weeks old, and as happy and frisky as a kitten. It was funny to see her snuggle up to Mrs. Sutton, whom she seemed to consider as her mother. And, sure enough, the farmer's wife was the only mother the poor little thing had ever known, her own having been killed when she was only a few days old.

Mrs. Sutton produced a bottle of milk from her pocket, and little Miss Molly took her dinner as nicely as a baby might have done.

"Now, what do you think o' that? Ain't it a funny baby? Why, it 's almost as much care as a baby; but it was so little and helpless that I jist could n't let it die; and it took to its meals as nat'ral as ye please. How do ye think I keep her so clean? I wash her every Monday, and stand her in the tin oven ter dry. Jist poke her in head foremost, and let her stan' and warm till her wool is dry as a bone. She ain't got sense enough to turn round and come out, and we don't never let it get too warm. She follers me everywhere, an' if I did n't keep her tied up she would git into mischief every minute."

Denise and Pokey petted and fondled the pretty little thing, and it seemed to see that they would not harm it; for it got into Pokey's lap as she sat on the grass beside it, and made itself comfortable as for a morning nap.

At last they realized that time was slipping by, and putting Molly on the grass, they bade Mrs. Sutton good-by.

But after their bountiful luncheon it was small wonder that their appetites failed to admonish them that noon was upon them, and they would barely have time to reach home before Aunt Helen's train was due.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN INVITING LANE.

"LET 's go down this lane a little way," said Denise, when they were about half way home. "I 've never been down it and it always looks so inviting that I 've often wanted to go."

"Do you think there will be time?" asked Pokey. "You know Aunt Helen said we must be back by one o'clock."

"Oh, yes, I guess so. Let 's see what time it is, anyway. Why, where is my watch?" was the startled exclamation.

"You did n't put it on. I saw it on the bureau when I went back to get my pocket-handkerchief, just before we started."

"Oh, me! Now we *are* in a fix. But, anyway, I guess it can't be more than twelve o'clock, and we are more than half-way home now." And Denise turned Ned's head down the lane, much to that wise beast's disgust, for he had not found apples particularly sustaining, and his craving for something more substantial hinted the time of day more correctly than Denise's guessing.

By way of manifesting his disapproval, he wriggled from one side of the lane to the other, leaving a perfect snake-track behind him.

"Did you *ever* see anything act as he does?" demanded Denise. "He is too exasperating to be endured. Ned Toodles, *behave* yourself!" And the whip was cracked menacingly.

A fig cared Ned for the whip. It never had caused him much fear, and he did n't believe it was going to do any great amount of harm now. So, giving two or three tantalizing jumps of defiance, he rushed into a barnyard in which the lane suddenly terminated. Not a particularly attractive barnyard was this, either, for

it was littered with all sorts of farm paraphernalia, and simply alive with cows, chickens, ducks, dogs, and youngsters. The latter at once swarmed around the pony and carriage, and began to ask questions at the rate of forty a minute. Denise began to feel that following

"Hullo, Sis! Is this yer pony yours?"

"Yes."

"Where did yer git it?"

"Papa gave him to me."

"Where did he get him? What did he have to pay fur it? Lots er cash, I 'll bet."

"I don't know what it cost," said poor Denise, trying to find some way out of the scrape and the barnyard. Turning Ned's head, she made the attempt, but "Griselda Goose" was not to be done out of her rare treat so soon.

"Here, hold on a minute. I don't want yer ter go yet," said she, holding Ned by the bridle, while brothers and sisters crowded almost into the carriage, one taking out the pretty whip, another tugging at the linen lap cover, another unrolling the curtain behind—in short, swarming over the whole thing like ants.

"Say, what 's yer name, anyway, and where do yer live?"

"My, don't I wish I had a little horse like that! Are yer rich? Guess yer must be, ter have such things."

Meanwhile, unhappy Pokey was growing more and more mis-



"DENISE AND POKEY PETTED THE LITTLE LAMB."

an inviting lane was perhaps not the wisest thing she had ever done, and to wish most heartily that she had kept to the homeward road.

The eldest of the tribe, a girl of about eleven years, elected herself spokeswoman, and began to catechize the new arrivals most freely.

erable and at last turned to Denise and said desperately:

"Do for *mercy's* sake try to get away; they are just *awful* and besides, I *know* we shall be late!"

"You *must* let me go," said the distracted Denise. "We shall be late for luncheon."

"What 's that?" asked her tormentor.

"What is *what*?"

"Why, that thing yer just said—ludgen. Is it a train?"

"No, *dinner*," said Denise, trying politely to hide her laughter.

"Oh, is *that* what yer call it? Yes, I reckon it *is* most dinner time, for Ma, she said we must all set to and git ours down right smart, for she had to go over to see Uncle Josh this afternoon. He 's been *awful* sick. See that barn down yander? Well, he 's *there*. He 's jist gittin' over smallpox. Ever had it?"

But Denise did not wait to inform her. With a slash of her whip which took Ned off all four feet and scattered the youngsters in every direction, she started out of that barnyard at a pace which defied pursuit, and reached the main road in much less time than it had taken her to reach the farm.

But her troubles were not yet ended, for about half a mile from home she was met by John mounted on "Flash," he having been despatched by Aunt Helen, who had arrived by the one-thirty train and was nearly distracted when she found that the children had not yet returned.

"Faith, wheriver have yes been to at all?" demanded he, lapsing into his richest brogue in his excitement. "It 's scared half dead yer Aunt is wid the freight ye 've put her in."

"Oh, John," cried Denise half in tears, "don't say one word, for we 've had an *awful* experience, and been near a man who has smallpox."

"Presarve us! Wheriver could ye have been at all?"

But Denise offered no explanation, and hurried home at a pace which would have scandalized her had she been less excited.

Aunt Helen's feelings can be more readily imagined than described, and no time was lost in sending John off for Dr. Swift. He soon calmed her fears, by assuring her that there could be no possible danger for the children, as both had been vaccinated that spring, and had such not been the case, no harm would have come of it, as the man was quite recovered. But the scare had done them good, he said; and the kind, jolly doctor threw back his head and laughed heartily.

But never again did Denise explore inviting

lanes. Public roads and broad highways were quite to her taste ever after. Nor did she leave her watch at home when going on a trip upon which it was necessary to know the difference between half-past twelve and half-past two o'clock, although it is true that she soon after got into an epidemic of scrapes which cast that one into the shade.

CHAPTER IX.

HOUSE-CLEANING AND MISCHIEF.

THINGS ran very smoothly for some time after Denise's exploring expedition, and the time for Mr. and Mrs. Lombard's return was near at hand.

Aunt Helen began to congratulate herself that a delightfully clear record could be reported when the commanders-in-chief should once more assume control, for, to tell the truth, she never felt quite certain as to what might turn up next, and much preferred visiting when the responsibility for the little girls rested with them instead of herself.

"I am so glad," said she to the children, as they sat at breakfast one morning, "that only one little scrape has to be reported when Papa and Mama come. It 's such a comfort to have had you behave so well, dearies, and I am going to put an extra lump of sugar in each cup just by way of reward," and she laughingly selected the biggest two she could find in the sugar-basin.

"Here comes John with the mail now!" cried Denise. "Maybe there is a letter from Papa to tell us when they are coming," and she flew out of the dining-room to get the letters. Whisking back again, she thrust the mail-bag into her aunt's hands, saying excitedly: "Open it quickly, Auntie, *please do*."

"Yes, here is one from Papa, and now let 's see what he has to tell us." After reading a few minutes, she said in a surprised tone:

"Why, he will be home to-night by the six-o'clock express, and will bring Captain Hamilton with him for a little visit."

"Won't Mama come too?" asked Denise in a disappointed tone.

"No, she will stay with Grandma a week, and when she returns will bring her too."

"Oh, goody, goody! Won't that be just splendid! Will she stay long?"

"Yes, a long time, I think — perhaps all winter. But now we must set about preparing for our visitors, and have everything put in spandy order."

Little did poor Auntie dream how much "putting in order" she was destined to do before sunset, or how easy it is to count one's chicks before they are out of the shell.

Turned loose for the morning, Pokey and Denise made straight for the Bird's Nest, and such a scouring and cleaning as was gone through with! Of course, upon so important an occasion, it had to be well swept and dusted from garret to ground floor. It was a wonder that the rugs had any fringe left on them, for Denise banged them so energetically that they flapped about like witches on a broom handle, and her dusting-cap flew wildly off, and roosted on a neighboring tree.

After the house was in order, the dolls had to be dressed, and I grieve to relate that in being carried from the dining-room, where they had sat around the table since the night before, to the bedroom above, poor Angenora Manuella slipped from Pokey's arms and rolled to the bottom of the stairs, cracking her crown and shattering an arm.

"Oh, you precious, precious child!" shrieked her mother. "I *know* you are killed! Pokey, fly for Dr. Glue this instant, and fetch him with you at once, while I heat some water. You know he always wants it first thing."

Pokey rushed off to the house for the bottle of glue which represented the doctor, and in a few minutes poor Angenora Manuella was undergoing a surgical operation.

The fortitude the dear child displayed was really beautiful to witness in one so delicately organized, for she never uttered a sound, and fell asleep the instant she was placed in her bed.

But at length the Nest was all in apple-pie order, and Pokey stood upon the threshold and breathed a sigh of relief.

"I used to think that I just hated to do any housework or to wash dishes," she observed soberly; "but I just believe I sha'n't ever mind it again. I'll shut my eyes and make

believe I'm out here with you, and then it will all be fun. Don't let 's touch a pin on that cushion, for they are all put in in little squares, and I believe it took me over an hour to do it."

"Now let 's go look after Ned," cried Ned's energetic mistress. "What color ribbon would you tie on the harness to-day?"

"Why don't you tie rose-color? You know that stands for happiness, and I guess you are glad that Mr. Papa is coming home, are n't you?"

"Just the thing. How do you ever get to know all those things, Pokey?" asked Denise, quite impressed with Pokey's deep learning.

"Oh! I don't know. I guess I read them somewhere, and they sort of stick in some part of my brain till something makes one hop out."

So fully another hour was passed in brushing Ned's mane and braiding into it a long rose-colored ribbon. John had taught Denise how to braid it in one long braid, which ran the whole length of his neck, and ended in a little pig-tail at the withers.

Then the fore-lock had to be parted and braided into two braids decked with ribbons, and as a suitable conclusion to his personal adornment, his tail was braided into three braids and looped up with a big bow.

"Faith, he looks like a monkey!" said John, laughing.

"No, John, he does n't either — do you, dear? It 's a hot day, and he is much more comfortable without all that hair flying about, I know."

"I hope he won't go and get all mussed up," said Pokey, as she surveyed him approvingly. "He is so black and shiny that those ribbons look just too sweet on him."

"Ned Toodles," said Denise, admonishingly, as she turned him into his day-stall and fastened the bars; "don't you go scrooching up against the sides of your stall and mussing even one end of a ribbon, or you sha'n't have any sugar for a week!"

Then the harness was decked, and when a bow was tied on the whip the effect was pronounced superb.

Noon hour struck before all was finished, and

Auntie, coming out to summon them to lunch, blessed the good fairy who had put the idea of the Bird's Nest into Papa's head, as it kept the children happy and out of the way of grown-up folk who had their hands full.

"John," said she, giving him a letter, "before you return from your dinner to-day, I wish

gittin' it, or there 's no tellin' what that young villain will be doin' at all!"

"Don't you call Ned a villain, John. He would n't do anything bad for all the oats in the bin."

"Now, don't you be too sure of that, thin. I 'd not thrust him out of me soight." And

with a good-natured laugh John left the grounds.

"Come in at once, children," said Auntie, as she returned to the house.

"We 're coming this very minute, for we 're half starved."

"Now, my little maids," said Auntie, when the famished children were sustained by a generous supply of luncheon, "you may amuse yourselves in any quiet way you choose, till it is three o'clock; and then come to me for your baths, and I 'll make you both as sweet as roses to meet Papa and Captain Hamilton."

Away went the children, and, taking Auntie at her word, chose a charming "quiet way" to amuse themselves on a hot summer's afternoon.

"Let 's make some taffy," said Denise.

"I have plenty of mo-



"AFTER THE HOUSE WAS IN ORDER, THE DOLLS HAD TO BE DRESSED."

you would mail this letter for me. I want it to go out by the two o'clock mail, without fail, so you had better go home at once."

"Very good, miss. I 'll be going roight off. Shall I close Ned's stable-door, or will Miss Denise do it whan she goes in?"

"I 'll shut it when I go," answered Denise.

"All roight thin; but don't be affther for-

lasses in the kitchen, and we can boil it in no time."

"It will *never* get hard on such a hot day as this is," answered Pokey.

"Why, yes it will, if we put it in cook's refrigerator," insisted Denise.

"I don't believe it, for it 's awful stuff in summer time," said skeptical Pokey.

"Well, we 'll try, any way"; and she soon had a fire sputtering in the stove and a pail of molasses bubbling on top.

"What *can* be the matter with Ned?" she exclaimed, when the smell of the boiling candy had filled the house and adjoining stable.

"He is stamping about at a great rate; I just believe he smells this candy."

"I dare say; he loves sweet things like a little bear," said Pokey.

"Do go into the stable and see what he 's up to," begged Denise. "I can't leave this candy now, or it will burn."

"Indeed I sha'n't," affirmed Pokey. "He 'd roll his eyes and bounce at me."

"Now, how *could* he bounce at you, when he is fast in his stall?" demanded Denise,

"I don't believe he *is* fast; he could n't walk round so much if he was."

"Why, how in the world could he get out? His bars are up, and I don't believe even *he* is wise enough to pull the pegs out. You stir this candy, and I 'll go see, if you are afraid to."

And Denise handed over a very sticky spoon to the willing Pokey and started for the door communicating with the stable. She opened it and gave a scream, for there in the middle of the floor, and in all his goodly array of rosy ribbons stood Master Ned, looking at her in the most tantalizing way, as though to say: "*Can't* I pull out the pegs with my teeth, and *can't* I jump over the lower bar, and *can't* I fly through this door which *you* forgot to shut after John told you to?" and with a rush and a clatter he tore out of the stable and over the lawn, flinging up his heels and tossing his head and making straight for the big gate, which unfortunately stood wide open.

Denise stood rooted to the spot for an instant and then screaming, "Pokey, Pokey, Ned has run away!" she tore out of the stable and made after him as though she had wings to her feet.

Aunt Helen heard the uproar and rushed out just in time to witness Ned's final kick up as he flew up the road with Denise in hot pursuit.

(To be continued.)



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THE GIANT BABY.

BY GELETT BURGESS.

MISS ANN and Ella Sorrowtop were ladies sweet and kind;

They were charitable, wealthy, educated, and refined;

They were never known to turn away a beggar, with a frown;

And they lived a quiet life in an exclusive part of town.

Miss Ann was more indulgent, and the children loved her much—

She gave them chocolate lollipops, and sugar pills, and such.

Miss Ella was more practical, and saw about their clothes;

She attended to their mittens, and she darned their little hose;

For they had no children of their own, and oh, it made them sad,

And so they loved the little ones that other people had!
And whether they were naughty ones, or whether they were nice,
As long as they were children, that alone would quite suffice.

Well, one wild and wintry Wednesday, on returning from a call,
They found a basket on their steps, and heard a little bawl!
Miss Ann she nearly fainted, and she said, "What *can* it be?"
Miss Ella was more practical—she said, "I'll look and see!"
And what d' you s'pose the basket held? It held a baby boy!
Miss Ann and Ella Sorrowtop, they nearly died of joy!
They took him to the fireplace and got him good and warm,
For it is n't good for babies to be cradled in a storm.
It was a lusty young one, and it kicked and said, "Ah-goo!"
Which pleased the kind old ladies so they scarce knew what to do!
They decided to adopt him then and bring him up by hand;
And oh, the happy future that Miss Ann and Ella planned!
Miss Ann was bound to name him Guy St. Claire Philippe; but no—
Miss Ella was more practical, and so they called him Joe.

He grew and grew and grew and grew, out-growing all his frocks;
They squandered quite a fortune in his roundabouts and socks.



"HE FOUND A PRETTY OLD WHITE HORSE."

They made his clothes with many tucks, and let them
out each week;

For he was a monstrous infant when he just began to
speak.

The children loved to play with him at first; but as he
grew,

They got afraid to meet him, and I think that you
would, too;

For when he was but two years old he measured six
feet high.

He did n't mean to do it, but he made the children cry;
For when he fell upon them it would hurt a little bit,
And the children hated playing "tag" whenever Joe
was "it."

Miss Ann and Ella Sorrowtop still tended him with joy,
Although they saw at last he was a GIANT baby boy!
"If he only *would* stop growing up!" Miss Ann would
cry and fret;

But Miss Ella was more practical—she said, "He'll
save us yet!"

When Joe was very little he was fond of pussy-cats;
But as he grew enormous, kittens feared his baby pats.

So when he grew quite big enough for kilts (with pockets, too),
What do you think that giant baby went and tried to do?
He found a pretty old white horse, and broke his halter strap;
He took poor Dobbin's harness off, and held him in his lap!
Miss Ann she nearly died of fright for her adopted son;
Miss Ella was more practical—she only said "What fun!"



"HE TRIMMED THE SPIRES AND STEEPLES."

And then got stuck inside the walls, and cried about it, too;
Of how he swept the streets with trees, and fell asleep one day,
And snored a little giant-snore that scared the
Mayor away!

But better yet they love to tell of
how Miss Ann, of all
Most dignified of ladies, tried to
please him as a doll!

For dolls are most expensive
when they have to be so
great,

And Joe he wanted one
so much she could
not hesitate.

She dressed herself in
pink and white;
she gazed a doll-like stare,
She let him carry her around, a hun-
dred feet in air!

She ejaculated, "Papa!" and she sweetly shut
her eyes

When he held her in his arms, aloft, to every
one's surprise.

And so these ladies bought the horse, and let
him play with Joe.
It set the village people laughing at his antics
so!

Well, Joe was very good and kind, and *tried* to
be so good

That everybody loved him, when at last they
understood.

Miss Ann she feared his giant parents might
return some day.

Miss Ella was more practical — she said, "No,
sir, not they!

And if they do, what of it? They will pay us
for our care."

For his food *had* cost them something — he
had had the best of fare.

So the giant baby grew and grew, the town's
gigantic pet;

And they talk about his childish pranks with
shrieks of laughter yet:

How he tried to help them deck the town
upon the first of May,

And trimmed the spires and steeples in a
most amusing way;

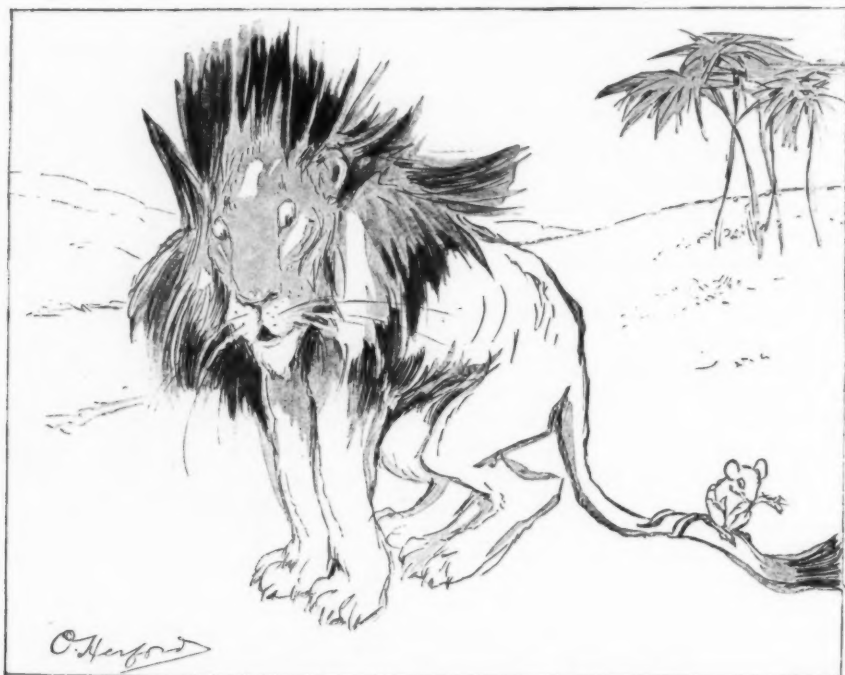
How he stepped upon the court-house roof
and suddenly fell through,



"A LITTLE GIANT-SNORE THAT SCARED THE MAYOR AWAY."

For she loved her darling Joe-boy, spite of all his giant pranks;
But Miss Ella was more practical—she only said, "No, thanks!"

Well, what this infant *would* have done, if he had only stayed,
I hardly dare to say myself,—what games he would have played.
But one stupid snowy Sunday, on returning from a call,
The Misses Sorrowtop they found he was n't there at all!
They hunted in the pasture, where he always used to play;
They hunted in the old red barn, and in his bed of hay;
They hunted in the woods around, and on the river shore;
But they never found their little giant baby any more!
But in their great front parlor, which was shabby now, and old,
Whatever do you s'pose they found, but heaps and heaps of gold!
They had spent a fortune on the child, and so they now were poor;
And this the giant parents left to pay them, to be sure!
Miss Ann she cried like everything, for she was sweet and kind;
Miss Ella was more practical—she said, "Oh, never mind!"



WHAT made this Lion quake and quail?
A mouse sat down on the monarch's tail!

THE BUCCANEERS AND PIRATES OF OUR COAST.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

[This series was begun in the November number.]

CHAPTER XX.

EXIT BUCCANEER; ENTER PIRATE.

THE buccaneers had grown to be reckless freebooters. And when they became soldiers and marched in little armies, the patience of the civilized world began to weaken. Panama, for instance, was an important Spanish city; England was at peace with Spain; therefore, when a military force composed mainly of Englishmen, and led by a British subject, captured and sacked Panama, if England should not interfere with her buccaneers she would have a quarrel to settle with Spain.

So a new governor was sent to Jamaica with strict orders to put down the buccaneers and to break up their organization, and then it was he set a thief to catch thieves, and empowered the ex-pirate, Morgan, to execute his former comrades.

But methods of conciliation, as well as threats of punishment, were used to induce the buccaneers to give up their illegal calling, and liberal offers were made to them to settle in Jamaica and become law-abiding citizens.

But these offers did not tempt the Brothers of the Coast; from active pirates to retired pirates was too great a change, and though some of them returned to their original avocations of cattle butchering and beef drying, some, it is said, chose rather to live among the wild Indians and share their independent lives, than to bind themselves to any form of honest industry.

The French also had been active in suppressing the operations of their buccaneers, and soon the Brethren of the Coast, considered as an organization for preying upon the commerce and settlers of Spain, might be said to have ceased to exist. But it must not be supposed

that because buccaneering had died out that piracy was dead.

Driven from Jamaica, from San Domingo, and even from Tortuga, they retained a resting place only at New Providence, an island in the Bahamas, and this they did not maintain very long. Then they spread themselves all over the watery world. They were no longer buccaneers, they were no longer "Brothers" of any sort, they no longer set out merely against Spaniards, but their attacks were made upon people of every nation. They confined themselves to attacks upon peaceable merchant vessels, often robbing them and then scuttling them, delighted with the spectacle of a ship, with all its crew, sinking hopelessly into the sea.

The scene of piratical operations in America was now very much changed. The successors of the Brothers of the Coast, no longer united by any bonds of fellowship, but each pirate captain acting independently in his own wicked way, were coming up from the West Indies to afflict the more northern sea coast.

The old buccaneers knew all about our southern coast, for they were among the very first white men who ever set foot on the shores of North and South Carolina. The old buccaneers often used its bays and harbors as convenient ports of refuge. It was natural enough that when the Spanish-hating buccaneer became the independent pirate, who preyed upon ships of every nation, he should feel very much at home on the Carolina coasts.

As the country was settled and Charles Town, now Charleston, grew to be a port of considerable importance, the pirates felt as much at home in this region as when it was inhabited merely by Indians. They frequently touched at little seaside settlements and boldly sailed into the harbor of Charles Town. The American colonists were not frightened when they saw a pirate ship anchored in their har-

bors, for they knew its crew did not come as enemies, but as friendly traders.

A pirate ship was a welcome visitor in Charles Town harbor. She was generally loaded with goods, which, being stolen, her captain could afford to sell cheaply, and as Spanish gold was plenty on board, her crew were not apt to haggle in regard to the price of the spirits, the groceries, or the provisions which they bought from the merchants of the town. This friendly commerce between the pirates and the Carolinians grew to be so extensive that at one time most of the coin in circulation in those colonies consisted of Spanish gold-pieces, which had been brought in by the pirates.

But a pirate is very seldom a person of discretion, who knows when to leave well enough alone, and so, instead of contenting themselves with robbing and capturing the vessels belonging to people whom their Charles Town friends and customers would look upon as foreigners, they became so enterprising in their illegal trading that the English government took vigorous measures, not only to break up piracy, but to punish all colonists who should encourage the freebooters by commercial dealings with them. At these laws the pirates laughed and the colonists winced, and there were many people in Charles Town who vowed that if the king wanted them to help him put down piracy, he must show them some other way of getting imported goods at reasonable prices. So the pirates went on capturing merchantmen whenever they had a chance, and the Carolinians continued to look forward with interest to the "bargain days," which always followed the arrival of a pirate ship. But the time came when the people of Charles Town experienced a change of mind. The planters were now growing large quantities of rice, and this crop became so valuable that the prosperity of the colonies greatly increased. And now the pirates also became very much interested in the rice crops, and when they had captured four or five vessels sailing out of Charles Town heavily laden with rice, the people of that town suddenly became aware of the true character of a pirate. He was now in their eyes an unmitigated scoundrel who actually stole *their* goods—their precious rice which they were sending to England.

The indignant citizens of Charles Town took a bold stand, and when part of a crew of pirates, put ashore by their comrades on account of a quarrel, made their way to the town, thinking they could tell a tale of shipwreck, and rely upon the friendship of their old customers, they were taken into custody and seven were hanged.

The occasional repetition of such acts as this, and the exhibition of dangling pirates, hung up like scarecrows at the entrance to the harbors, dampened the ardor of the freebooters, and for some years they kept away from the harbor of Charles Town, which had once been to them such a good market and friendly port.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GREAT "BLACKBEARD" COMES UPON THE STAGE.

So long as the people of the Carolinas were prosperous and able to capture and execute pirates who interfered with their trade, the Atlantic sea-robbers kept away from their ports; but this prosperity did not last. Indian wars broke out, and in the course of time the colonies became very much weakened and impoverished, and then it was that the harbor of Charles Town began again to be interesting to the pirates.

About this time one of the most famous of sea-robbers was harassing the Atlantic coast of North America, and from New England to the West Indies he was known as the great pirate "Blackbeard." This man, whose real name was Teach, was a terrible fellow in appearance as well as acts. He wore a long, heavy black beard, which it was his fancy to separate into tails, each one tied with a colored ribbon, and often tucked behind his ears. Some of the writers of that day declared that the sight of this beard would create more terror in any port of the American seaboard than would the sudden appearance of a fiery comet. Across his brawny breast he carried a sort of sling, in which hung not less than three pairs of pistols in leathern holsters, and these, in addition to his cutlass and a knife or two in his belt, made him a most formidable-looking fellow.

In the early part of the eighteenth century

Blackbeard made his headquarters in one of the inlets on the North Carolina coast, and there he ruled as absolute king, for the settlers in the vicinity seemed to be as anxious to oblige him as the captains of the merchantmen were anxious to keep out of his way. On one of his voyages Blackbeard went down the coast as far as Honduras, where he took a good many prizes, and, as some of the crews of the captured vessels enlisted under him, he sailed north with a stronger force than ever before, having a large ship of forty guns, three smaller vessels, and four hundred men. With this little fleet Blackbeard made for the coast of South Carolina, and anchored outside the harbor of Charles Town. He well understood the present condition of the place, and was not in the least afraid that the citizens would hang him up on the shores of the bay.

Blackbeard began work without delay. Several well-laden ships sailing out to sea were surprised and were immediately captured. One of these carried not only a valuable cargo but a number of important passengers on their way to England. One of these was a Mr. Wragg, who was a member of the Council of the Province. Blackbeard was a trader as well as a plunderer, and he therefore determined to put an assorted lot of highly respectable passengers upon the market and see what he could get for them. He was not in need of money or provisions, but his men were in want of medicines, so he decided to trade off his prisoners for apothecary's supplies.

He put three of his pirates in a boat and with them one of the passengers, a Mr. Marks, who was commissioned as Blackbeard's special agent, with orders to inform the governor that if he did not send the medicines required, and if he did not allow the pirate crew of the boat to return in safety, every one of the prisoners would be hanged from the yard-arms of his ship.

The boat rowed away to the distant town, and Blackbeard waited two days for its return, and then he grew very angry, for he believed that his messengers had been taken into custody and he came near hanging Mr. Wragg and all his companions. But before he began to satisfy his vengeance news came from the boat. It had been upset in the bay and had been de-

layed in getting to Charles Town. Blackbeard now waited a day or two longer, but as no news came from Mr. Marks he vowed he would not be trifled with by the impudent people of Charles Town, and threatened that every man, women, and child among the prisoners should be hanged.

Of course the unfortunate prisoners on the pirate ship were in a terrible state of mind during the absence of Mr. Marks. They trembled and quaked by day and by night, and at last every particle of courage left them, and they proposed to Blackbeard that if he would spare their lives, and that if it should turn out that their fellow citizens had decided to sacrifice them for the sake of a few paltry drugs they would show Blackbeard the best way to sail into the harbor and would join with him and his men in attacking the city and punishing the inhabitants.

This proposition pleased Blackbeard immensely; it would have been like a new game to take Mr. Wragg to the town and make him fight his fellow members of the Council of the Province; and so he rescinded his order for a general execution and bade his prisoners prepare to join with his pirates when he should give the word for an assault upon their city.

In the meantime there was a terrible stir in Charles Town. If there had been any way of going out to sea to rescue their unhappy fellow citizens every able-bodied man in the town would have enlisted. But they had no vessels of war and were not even in a position to arm any of the merchantmen in the harbor. It seemed to the governor and his council that there was nothing for them to do but to submit to the demands of Blackbeard, for they very well knew that he was a scoundrel who would keep his word, and also, that whatever they did must be done quickly, for there were the three swaggering pirates in the town, strutting about the streets as if they owned the place. If this continued much longer it would be impossible to keep the infuriated citizens from falling upon these blustering rascals and bringing their impertinence to a summary end. Then not only would Mr. Wragg and his companions be put to death but the pirates would undoubtedly attack the town, which was entirely defenseless.

Consequently the drugs were collected with all possible haste, and Mr. Marks and the pirates were sent with them to Blackbeard. He accepted the ransom, and having rifled the ships he had captured, and having stripped his prisoners of the greater part of their clothing, he set them on shore to walk to Charles Town as well as they could. They had a terribly difficult time, making their way through the woods and marshes, for there were women and children among them who were scarcely equal to the journey.

One of these children was a son of Mr. Wragg, a little boy who afterward became a very prominent man in the colonies. He rose to such a high position, not only among his countrymen, but in the opinion of the English government, that when he died, about the beginning of the Revolution, a tablet to his memory was placed in Westminster Abbey, which is, perhaps, the earliest instance of such an honor being paid to an American.

Blackbeard sailed back to his North Carolina haunts and took a long vacation, during which time he managed to put himself on very good terms with the governor and officials of the country. He had plenty of money and was willing to spend it, and so he was allowed to do pretty much as he pleased, provided he kept his purse open, and did not steal from his neighbors.

But Blackbeard became tired of playing the part of a make-believe respectable citizen, and he fitted out a small vessel, and took out regular papers for a port in the West Indies, and sailed away, as if he had been a mild-mannered New England mariner going to catch codfish.

After a moderate absence he returned to Bath, bringing with him a large French merchant vessel, with no people on board, but loaded with a valuable cargo of sugar and other goods. This vessel he declared he had found deserted at sea, and he therefore claimed it as a legitimate prize. It may seem surprising that the officials of Bath appeared to have no doubt of the truth of Blackbeard's simple story of his good luck.

But people who consort with pirates cannot be expected to have very tender consciences,

and no one in the town interfered with the thrifty Blackbeard or caused any public suspicion to fall upon the propriety of his actions.

CHAPTER XXII.

A TRUE-HEARTED SAILOR DRAWS HIS SWORD.

FEELING that he could do what he pleased on shore as well as at sea, Blackbeard sailed up and down the coast and took a prize or two to keep the pot boiling for himself and his men.

On one of these expeditions he visited Philadelphia, but the governor of the colony quickly arranged to let him know that the "Quaker City" allowed no pirate to promenade the streets, and promptly issued a warrant for the sea-robber's arrest. But Blackbeard was too old a criminal to be caught in that way, and left the city.

The people along the coast of North Carolina became very tired of Blackbeard and his men. To have this busy pirate for a neighbor was like taking a pickpocket on a picnic, and the North Carolina settlers greatly longed to get rid of him.

Not knowing, or not caring for the strong feeling against him, Blackbeard kept on in his wicked ways till the North Carolinians vowed they would stand him no longer, and, knowing their own governor would not aid them, applied to Governor Spotswood, of Virginia, and asked his aid in putting down the pirates. The Virginians were very willing to do what they could for their unfortunate neighbors. The legislature offered a reward for the capture of Blackbeard or any of his men, but the governor, feeling that this was not enough, determined to do something on his own responsibility, for he knew very well that the time might come when the pirate vessels might begin to haunt Virginia waters.

There happened to be at that time two small British men-of-war in Hampton Roads, and although the governor had no authority to send these after the pirates he fitted out two sloops at his own expense and manned them with the best fighting men from the war-vessels. One of the sloops he put under Captain Brand and the other under Lieutenant Maynard, both brave

and experienced naval officers. All preparations were made with the greatest secrecy; for if Blackbeard had heard of what was going on he probably would have decamped; and then the

but Brand and Maynard were courageous men and did not hesitate to undertake it.

The Virginians had been informed that the pirate captain and his men were on a vessel in



THE PIRATE "BLACKBEARD" SLAIN BY LIEUTENANT MAYNARD.

two sloops went out to sea with a commission from the governor to capture Blackbeard, and bring him back dead or alive.

This certainly promised to be no light task,

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Ocracoke Inlet, and when they arrived they found to their delight that Blackbeard was there. When the pirates saw the two armed vessels sailing into the inlet they knew very well

that they were about to be attacked, and it did not take them long to get ready for a fight, nor did they wait to see what their enemy was about to do. As soon as the sloops were near enough, Blackbeard, without waiting for any preliminary exercises, such as a demand for surrender or any nonsense of that sort, let drive at the intruders with eight heavily loaded cannon.

Now the curtain had been rung up and the play began, and a very lively play it was. The guns of the Virginians blazed away at the pirate ship, and they would have sent boats to board her had not Blackbeard done so first. Boarding was always a favorite method of fighting with the pirates. They did not often carry heavy cannon, and even when they did, they had but little fancy for battles at long distances; what they liked was to meet their foes face to face and cut them down on their own decks. In such combats they felt at home, and were almost always successful, for there were few marines or sailors, even in the British navy, who could stand against these brawny fellows.

Blackbeard had had enough cannonading, and he did not wait to be boarded. Springing into a boat with about twenty of his men he rowed to the vessel commanded by Maynard, and in a few minutes he and his pirates surged on board of her.

Then there followed on the decks of that sloop one of the most fearful hand-to-hand combats known to naval history. Pirates had often attacked vessels where they met with strong resistance, but never had a gang of sea-robbers fallen in with such bold and skilled antagonists as those who now confronted Blackbeard and his crew.

At it they went fiercely, cut, fire, slash, bang, howl, and shout. Steel clashed, pistols blazed, smoke went up, and it was hard, in the confusion, for a man to tell friend from foe. Blackbeard was everywhere, bounding from side to side as he swung his cutlass high and low, and many a shot was fired at him, many a rush was made in his direction, and every now and then a sailor went down beneath his whirling blade.

But the great pirate had not boarded that ship to fight with common men. He was look-

ing for Maynard, the commander. Soon he met him, and for the first time in his life the old pirate met his match.

Lieutenant Maynard was a practised swordsman, and no matter how hard and how swiftly came down the cutlass of the pirate his strokes were always evaded and the sword and the Virginian played more dangerously near him.

At last Blackbeard finding he could not cut down his enemy, drew a pistol and was about to empty its barrels into the very face of his opponent, when Maynard sent his sword-blade into the throat of the furious pirate, and the great Blackbeard went down upon his back on the deck, and — the next moment Maynard put an end to his nefarious career.

Their leader dead, the few pirates who were left alive gave up the fight and sprang overboard hoping to be able to swim ashore. The victory of the Virginians was complete.*

The strength, toughness, and extraordinary vitality of those catlike human beings who were known as pirates, was astonishing. Their suntanned and hairy bodies seemed to be made of something like wire, leather, and India rubber, upon which the most tremendous exertions, and even the infliction of severe wounds, came to make but little impression. Before Blackbeard fell he received from Lieutenant Maynard and others no less than twenty-five wounds, and yet he fought fearlessly to the last, and when the panting officer could at last sheathe his sword, he felt that he had performed a most signal deed of valor.

When they had broken up the pirate nest in Ocracoke Inlet the two sloops sailed to Bath, where they compelled some of the unscrupulous town officials to surrender the cargo which had been stolen from the French vessel and stored in the town by Blackbeard; and then they sailed proudly back to Hampton Roads, with the head of the dreaded Blackbeard dangling from the end of the bowsprit of the vessel he had boarded, and on whose deck it had been proved that a well-trained, honest man can fight better than the most reckless cutthroat who ever decked his beard with ribbons, and swaggered about in enmity to all things good.

* Our readers will remember that Blackbeard the pirate was a prominent character in Howard Pyle's story "Jack Ballister's Fortunes," which began in *ST. NICHOLAS* for April, 1894, and ended in September, 1895.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A GREENHORN UNDER THE BLACK FLAG.

EARLY in the eighteenth century there lived at Bridgetown, in the island of Barbados, a very pleasant, middle-aged gentleman named Major Stede Bonnet. He was a man in comfortable circumstances and had been an officer in the British army. He had retired from military service, and had bought an estate at Bridgetown, where he lived in comfort and was respected by his neighbors.

But for some reason or other this quiet and reputable gentleman got it into his head that he should like to be a pirate. But besides the general reasons why Major Bonnet should not become a pirate, and which applied to all men as well as to himself, there was a special reason against his adoption of the profession of a sea-robber—he was an out-and-out landsman and knew nothing whatever of nautical matters. He was fond of history and well read in the literature of the day. He was accustomed to the habits of good society, and knew a good deal about farming and horses and cows and poultry.

But notwithstanding his absolute unfitness for such a life, Major Bonnet was determined to become a pirate, and he became one. He had money enough to buy a ship and to fit her out and man her, and this he quietly did at Bridgetown, nobody supposing that he was going to do anything more than start off on some commercial cruise. When everything was ready his vessel slipped out of the harbor one night, and after he was sailing safely on the rolling sea he stood upon the quarter-deck and proclaimed himself a pirate. He ran up the black flag, girded on a great cutlass, and folding his arms he ordered his mate to steer the vessel to the coast of Virginia.

Bonnet's men were practised seamen, and so when this "green hand" came into the waters of Virginia he actually took two or three vessels and robbed them of their cargoes, burning the ships and sending the crews ashore.

This had grown to be a common custom among the pirates, who though cruel and hard-hearted, had not the inducements of the old buccaneers to torture and murder the crews

of the vessels which they captured. It was called "marooning," and was somewhat less heartless than the old methods.

As Bonnet wished to adopt the customs of the society in which he placed himself, when he found himself too far from land to put the captured crew on shore he did not hesitate to make them walk the plank, a favorite device of pirates whenever they had no convenient way of disposing of their prisoners.

In one branch of his new profession Bonnet rapidly advanced. He soon became a greedy robber and a cruel conqueror. He captured merchant vessels all along the coast as far north as New England.

Bonnet's vessel was named the "Revenge," which was about as ill-suited to the vessel as her commander was ill-fitted to sail her, for Bonnet had nobody to revenge himself upon. But many pirate ships were then called the *Revenge*, and Bonnet was bound to follow the fashion.

Soon after he had proclaimed himself a pirate, his men discovered that he knew no more about sailing than he knew about painting portraits, and the crew conceived a great contempt for a landsman captain. Many of the men would have been glad to throw Bonnet overboard and take the ship into their own hands. But when any symptoms of mutiny showed themselves the pirates found that, although not a sailor, Bonnet was a determined and relentless master. At the slightest sign of insubordination, his grumbling men were put in chains or flogged; and it was Bonnet's habit at such times to strut about the deck with loaded pistols, threatening to shoot any man who dared to disobey him.

Bonnet now pointed the bow of the *Revenge* southward,—that is, he requested somebody else to see that it was done,—and sailed to the Bay of Honduras, a favorite resort of pirates. And here he first met Captain Blackbeard. The amateur pirate was glad to meet this well-known professional, and they became friendly. Blackbeard was organizing an expedition, and proposed that Bonnet should join it. This invitation was gladly accepted by the new-comer, and the two pirate captains started out on a cruise together.

Now the old reprobate, Blackbeard, knew everything about ships, and was a good navigator, and it was not long before he discovered that his new partner was as green as grass in regard to all nautical affairs. Consequently, he made up his mind that Bonnet was not fit to command a fine vessel, and as pirates make their own laws, and perhaps do not obey them if they happen not to feel like it, Blackbeard sent for Bonnet to come on board his ship, and told him he was not fit to be a pirate captain, that he must remain on Blackbeard's vessel, while somebody else took charge of the *Revenge*.

This was a fall indeed, and Bonnet was almost stunned by it! An hour before he had been proudly strutting about on the deck of a vessel which belonged to him, and in which he had captured many valuable prizes, and now he was told he must stay on Blackbeard's ship and make himself useful in keeping the logbook, or in doing any other easy thing which he might happen to understand! The green pirate ground his teeth and raged inwardly, but he said nothing openly; on Blackbeard's ship Blackbeard's decisions were not to be questioned.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BONNET AGAIN TO THE FRONT.

BONNET accompanied his pirate chief on various cruises, among which was that famous expedition to the harbor of Charles Town where Blackbeard traded Mr. Wragg and his companions for medicines.

Having a fine fleet Blackbeard did a successful business for some time, but feeling that he had earned enough for the present and deserved a vacation, he put into an inlet in North Carolina, where he disbanded and dismissed his crew.

So long as Blackbeard remained on shore he did not want a lot of men about him who would look to him for support when they had spent their portion of the spoils. Having no further use for Bonnet, he dismissed him also; and did not object to his resuming possession of his own vessel. If the green pirate chose to go to sea again, and perhaps drown himself

and his crew, it was a matter of no concern to Blackbeard.

But Stede Bonnet proceeded to prove that in some branches of the piratical business he was second to none of his fellow practitioners. He wished to go pirating again, and he saw a way he thought far superior to any of the common methods. King George of England, desirous of breaking up piracy, issued a proclamation in which he promised pardon to any pirate who would renounce his evil practices, and take an oath of allegiance. Soon after this proclamation had been issued England went to war with Spain. Bonnet saw in this state of affairs a very good chance for him to play the "wolf in sheep's clothing," and he began his new piratical career by pretending to give up piracy.

Leaving the *Revenge* in the Inlet, he journeyed overland to Bath, where he signed pledges, took oaths, and did everything necessary to make himself seem a respectable commander of a British privateer. Then he took out regular clearance papers for St. Thomas, a British naval station, to which he declared he was going in order to obtain a commission as a privateer.

Now the wily Bonnet had everything he wanted except a crew. Of course it would not do for him to go about enlisting pirates; but at this point fortune again favored him. He knew of a desert island not very far away where Blackbeard, at the end of his last cruise, had marooned a large party of his men. Bonnet went over to this island, and offered to take them to St. Thomas if they would agree to work the ship to port. They joyfully accepted, and thus the *Revenge* was manned with a complete crew of competent desperadoes.

These operations took time; and, at last, when everything was ready for Bonnet to start out on his piratical cruise, he heard news that caused him to change his mind and to set forth on another errand. He had supposed that Blackbeard, whom he had never forgiven, was still on shore enjoying himself; but he was told by the captain of a small trading-vessel that the old pirate was preparing for another cruise, and that he was then in Ocracoke Inlet. Now Bonnet folded his arms and stamped his

feet upon the quarterdeck. The time had come for him to show that the name of his vessel meant something. He would revenge himself upon Blackbeard!

The infuriated Bonnet sailed out to sea in a truly warlike frame of mind. He was not

relieved the world of one or both atrocious villains; and Lieutenant Maynard would have been deprived of the honor of having slain the most famous pirate of the day.

But Bonnet never overtook Blackbeard; so the great combat between the rival pirates did



STEDE BONNET, THE "LANDSMAN PIRATE," IS FORCED TO REMAIN ON BLACKBEARD'S SHIP AND TO GIVE UP HIS OWN VESSEL.

going forth to prey upon the unresisting merchantmen. He was on his way to punish the treachery of a black-hearted pirate.

When Bonnet reached Ocracoke Inlet he was deeply disappointed to find that Blackbeard had left that harbor; but he did not give up the pursuit. He made hot chase after the vessel of his pirate enemy, and kept a sharp lookout for him.

If the enraged Bonnet could only have met the ferocious Blackbeard face to face there might have been a combat which would have

not take place. The first thing he did was to change the name of his vessel. If he could not be revenged he would not sail in the *Revenge*. Casting about in his mind for a good name, he decided to call her the "*Royal James*," the name assumed by the son of James the Second, who was a pretender to the throne, and was then in France plotting against the English government.

The next thing he did was to change his own name; for he thought this would make matters better for him if he should be captured after

entering upon his new criminal career. So he called himself "Captain Thomas."

When these preliminaries had been arranged, he gathered his crew together and announced that instead of going to St. Thomas to get a commission as a privateer, he had determined to keep on in his old manner of life, and that he wished them to understand that not only was he a pirate captain, but that they were a pirate crew. Many of the men were very much surprised; but the crew's opinion of the green-hand captain had been considerably changed. In his various cruises he had learned a good deal about navigation, and could now give very fair orders; and his furious pursuit of Blackbeard had also given him a reputation for reckless bravery which he had not enjoyed before.

Besides it would not be very pleasant either to try to persuade him to give up his piratical intention, or to decline to join him; so the whole of the crew, minor officers and men, changed their minds about going to St. Thomas, and agreed to hoist the skull and cross bones, and to follow Captain Bonnet wherever he might lead.

The blustering captain soon after captured two valuable sloops, and, wishing to take them along with him without the trouble of transferring their cargoes to his own vessel, he left their crews on board and ordered them to

follow him. Some days after that, when one of the vessels seemed to be edging off, Bonnet sent her a message that if she did not keep closer to the Royal James he would sink her.

After a time Bonnet put into a North Carolina port in order to repair the Royal James, and seeing no easy and lawful way of getting planks and beams enough with which to make the necessary repairs, he captured a small sloop belonging in the neighborhood, and broke it up in order to get the material he needed to make his own vessel seaworthy.

Now the people of the North Carolina coast very seldom interfered with pirates, and it is likely that Bonnet might have stayed in port as long as he pleased, and repaired and refitted his vessel without molestation if he had bought and paid for the planks and timber he required. But when it came to boldly seizing on their property, it was too much even for the people of that region, and complaints of Bonnet's behavior spread from settlement to settlement, and it very soon became known all down the coast that there was a pirate in North Carolina who was committing depredations there, and was preparing to set out on a fresh cruise.

When these tidings came to Charles Town the citizens were thrown into great agitation. There was no naval force in the harbor, but Mr. William Rhett, a private gentleman, offered to fit out an expedition at his own expense.

(To be continued.)

CHEERFULNESS.

BY JENNIE B. HARTSWICK.

ONCE there was a little bee, a busy, buzzing fellow,
Who roamed among the flowers, thro' all the livelong day.

He very, very happy was,
And so, you see, he had to buzz;
Because the sun was shining, and because the month was May.

Once there was a little bird, a tiny, feathered songster;
Who twittered in the tree-top the sunny morning through.

Oh! he was glad to see the spring!
And, so you see, he had to sing—
To warble forth his happiness, as all the robins do.

Once there was a little flower, a-growing in a garden,
And from among its dewy leaves it raised its dainty head.
A little breeze came blowing by,
The air was soft, and blue the sky —
"Oh, I am glad to be awake!" the little blossom said.

Once there was a little child, who all the time was laughing;
He filled the house with merriment from morning until night.
He was *so* happy all the while,
And so, you see, he had to smile,
He found the world so beautiful, so wonderful, and bright.



ROUNDING THE CURVE.



A SONG OF MAY.

PUSSINELLA.

By F. W. H.

As no animal, however intelligent, can write letters, is it not only right and just that some one should speak for them, in a language which their best friends, the children, can understand? It seems so to me, as it does to the little mistress of the petted favorite whose pretty Italian name you see above. "Pussinella" is only a big, white Angora cat; and yet she has a good claim to our notice, for she is great and beautiful, and of wonderful intellect. The parents of "Pussinella" had been brought from Bagdad by the Prince of Naples to his mother, the good and beautiful Queen Marguerite of Italy. And a most original gift it was; for these two cats, though very beautiful, were as wild and ferocious as young tigers, and not at all disposed to take kindly to captivity, though their prison was a royal palace, and their keeper the gentlest and loveliest of women. When the cage in which they had traveled so far was opened, they were nothing daunted at finding themselves at court and right in the presence of royalty, but hissed and raised their backs, and showed their displeasure in the most decided way. The king and queen and many of the ladies even got down on their knees and made all sorts of overtures of peace; but it was of no use; the strangers were not to be cajoled into even a semblance of good-will, and at last were carried off, still growling and protesting, to the queen's own apartments, which were for the future to be their home.

Now you might certainly think they would be well content! but not so; they longed for the freedom of their native wilds. Perhaps there they were king and queen themselves, and had ruled right royally over a mighty kingdom. Who knows?

In time they became accustomed to the queen, and submitted without protest to her presence. It is seldom that kindness and gen-

tleness do not overcome the wildest heart. But with the king they were ever the same as at first. They always growled and snarled; and raised quite a rebellion against his coming into any room where they might be.

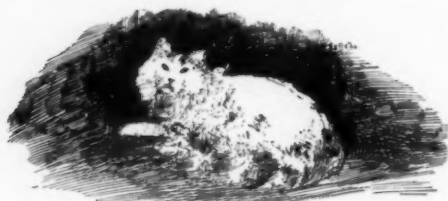
After a while two little kittens came to make them feel more at home. Pussinella was one of these, and, as you see, first opened her eyes in the queen's own bedroom, surrounded by every mark of respect and royalty. Is it strange that her heart swelled with pride and coldness toward the less favored world; that the majestic wave of her tail showed a consciousness of superiority; that she demanded and accepted as simply her right the best to be had? Remember, she is only a cat; might not many a little boy or girl act in a way that was quite as unreasonable?

Pussinella was the prettier of the two kittens: a little, soft, pure white ball, with long, silky hair, beautiful, big gray eyes, and a tail not like any ordinary cat—no, indeed! Pussinella's tail is as big as the end of a boa, and of a soft dove-color; and she has also one spot of the same pretty gray right in the middle of her back. This is now about the size of a fifty-cent piece, but when she was little of course the spot was little, and a source of great annoyance to vain Pussinella, who spent much time licking and licking and licking with her little pink tongue, trying to wash off what she thought a blemish upon her beautiful white coat; but it stayed nevertheless, and it is a very pretty spot, indeed.

When Miss Pussy was old enough to leave her mother, the queen sent her one day as a gift to the little daughter of one of the aides-de-camp of the king, her husband. This little girl had everything that heart could desire, and was much like the little prince that history tells us of, whose nurse found him one day crying "because he wanted to *want* something!" But such a gift as this was quite novel; and when

the pretty basket, with its top of blue satin like a bonbonnière, was opened and showed the dear little pussy-occupant nestled within, you can imagine the keen delight of this happy little girl.

Here was a plaything truly worth having, a real live one, and her joy was unbounded. But,



alas for Pussinella! — she could not share this pleasure. She had been taken away from her mother, and, in spite of caresses and dainties, for many days she did nothing but cry piteously and refuse all comfort. It is a cat's nature, however, to accommodate itself to circumstances; and before very long she seemed to forget her home in the Quirinal, and the softest cushions, and handsomest chairs, and warmest corners in her new quarters seemed to compensate her for the loss of her former grandeur.

At first, of course, she was too young to eat anything, and would not lap the milk from a saucer as do other kittens; so she had to be fed like a baby, with a spoonful of milk at a time poured into her wee pink mouth. For this she had her own little spoon and little silver cup. This latter had belonged to the mother of her little mistress when she was a baby, and Pussinella grew so fond of it that she took it as her own especial property, and for several years, long after her milk-days were over, would never touch a drop of water given her in anything else, but would turn from glass or saucer and cry and mew until the chosen silver cup was brought.

While still very young, Pussinella traveled all the way from Rome to Genoa; for the father of her little mistress is a general, and Pussinella now found that she had entered upon a military life with all of its inconveniences as well as its pleasures. Poor little kitty, this first journey was a great trial to her, as indeed it was to every one else who went with her; for, what with

fright and discomfort, and general rage at thus being hurried off against her will, she cried lustily all night, neither sleeping herself nor allowing any one else to do so. In time even this was forgotten, and Pussinella settled down to a very pleasant, contented existence, having everything her own way, and ruling the whole household with such imperiousness that she soon gained for herself the amusing title of "*Padrona della Casa*," which means Mistress of the House.

Notwithstanding the fact that Pussinella was born in captivity, and brought up with the most tender loving care, she inherited a wild fierce nature which nothing seems able to tame or domesticate. So far as any one can contribute to her comfort, so far she permits their presence; but she allows not the slightest familiarity; a touch, or in fact a steady look, is always met with glaring eyes, tail upraised and waving like a plume, and such savage growls that the stoutest heart might well quail.

Only one exception she makes, and this is for her *padronchina*, or little mistress, whom she loves with a passion and complete absorption as strong as her nature is wild. Never have I seen such devotion, even in a dog, for it is all centered on just one person, to the exclusion of the whole world, and resembles more the love of a baby for its mother, than that of an animal for its master. At night she always sleeps very quietly on the bed of her *padronchina*, until seven in the morning, when she gets up, cries for some one to open the door, and then goes out on the terrace, which in Genoa is always on top of the house.

Here she stays in the warm, bright sunshine until her mistress appears. Then they usually have a gay romp together, for Pussinella is very fond of play and will spend hours dancing round on tiptoe with her shadow, or a leaf, or perhaps a little lizard, that she will catch in the cracks of the walls, and pat and paw and play with as if it were a mouse.

Sometimes, however, she wants more amusement than can be found by herself, and then she will run up to her *padronchina* with a peculiar coaxing purr, and, having attracted her attention, will dance off sideways in a graceful fashion. She repeats this over and over, until

the little girl lays down book or doll or sewing and joins in the sport. When her little mistress goes out, Pussinella seats herself in the ante-chamber and there waits her return, with all the

round the neck with her soft paws, purring all the while in a perfect ecstasy of content that her beloved companion is at home again.

On one occasion she was left at home while her padronchina went away on a visit of some weeks.

Pussinella was inconsolable, and would not allow any one to come near her; she forsook her sunny terrace, sat all day under a chair in a dark corner, and never washed herself once during all this time. Her grief was indeed great, and when the little girl returned it was a sad, forlorn pussy that flew to meet her, with her "feathers," as her little mistress always called the long silky fur, all ruffled and dirty, and a general unkempt appearance that would have rendered her scarcely recognizable had it not been for the fervent affection of her greeting.

Pussinella's every whim and humor are considered, and she has many, especially about her eating; no princess was ever half so fastidious or exacting, or gave so much trouble by her capricious appetite.

One day she will have only cooked meat, another only raw, still another none at all, but only fowl or birds. In Genoa, she had her own particular corner in the dining-room, with a little carpet on which her plate was set; but she did not always eat there — no, indeed! If the day was bright and sunny, she preferred the terrace, or the drawing-room, as her mood might be. She would walk ahead, looking back to see if



PUSSINELLA'S WELCOME HOME.

impatience of a child; and when she hears her step on the stone stairs, or the roll of the carriage to the door, she begins an excited cry, which does not cease until she is clasped in the arms of her dear mistress, whom she holds tight

she were being followed, until she got to the spot where she wished her meal, and there she would stop. She was always obeyed as respectfully as any royal queen, for her commands were usually enforced by such frantic cries or ominous

growls, that all feared to gainsay her, or preferred to keep the peace.

The kitchen was in the upper story of the house, and when Pussinella wished anything extra to eat, she would go upstairs to the door, put her head in and mew, and then turn and walk down, while the cook followed with the food. The kitchen was no place for so noble a lady to take her meals! I have seen five plates of different meats brought one after another, before she could find what suited her taste. I often wondered that the cook was so good and patient, but he admired her beauty and he feared her claws, so the result was complete obedience to her every whim.

One pretty habit of hers is always to cover anything left on her plate with an end of her carpet or anything at hand; she will scratch and scratch until she gets an end over the meat, and then walk contentedly away, though to what purpose no one can tell, as she never will eat anything once left. Many pages could be written about her tricks and her bright intelligence; how she opens doors for herself, recognizes her mistress's voice and step, even in another room, and scratches at the door, like a dog, for admittance, or, if she is not allowed to enter, sits quietly before it and never moves until

the one she loves so much comes out. She is full of curiosity, and will never allow even a paper parcel to come into the house, but she must run and smell and scratch, to see what it is; and, if she cannot find out herself, she will cry and cry until some one comes and opens it to let her look in. And most remarkable is her intense jealousy of all children, at whom she will hiss and snarl whenever they come to share her little lady's play.

But I am sure I have said enough to convince you that Pussinella is a very remarkable cat, and though she has many faults, you must, as I said, remember she is only a cat and has no mother to tell her what to do, and no brothers and sisters with whom to share her cake or chicken.

Then, too, she has always been petted and pampered and allowed to have her own way, and this, I am sure you will agree with me, is not very good, even for a cat.

She and her little mistress have now traveled again far to the south of beautiful Italy, and here, I fear, Pussinella will soon grow very fat and lazy in the warm, bright sunshine, and perhaps forget how to dance and catch lizards; though I am sure she will never forget to kiss and pat and love her dear padronchina.



PUSSINELLA AND THE LIZARD. (FROM A DRAWING BY MME. HENRIETTE RONNER.)

THE LAKERIM ATHLETIC CLUB.

BY RUPERT HUGHES.

[This story was begun in the December number.]

VIII.

STILL Quiz went on without slackening speed. It might ruin both tire and wheel-rim, but nothing should give him pause.

He urged his trembling wheel on until he felt himself near the banks of the creek that meandered round the Hawk's Nest. But he heard an angry roar instead of the gentle ripple he was used to. He knew that it was the time of spring freshets, and that the brook had doubled its width when he had ridden to his relay station the day before. But now a sudden flash of lightning that ripped the heavens barely saved him from pushing headlong into the wreck of the little wooden bridge that had carried the road across the harmless brook for years.

The snows melting in the far-away mountains, and the rains that had opened the flood-gates of the skies, had made a torrent of this peaceful stream. At the very brink of it Quiz leaped from his wheel.

And Lakerim only a mile away!

There was nothing to do now but take the railroad bridge, which crossed the brook on a high trestle a furlong away. Through the meadow he hastened, carrying his wheel on his shoulder and running as best he could.

He climbed the embankment that led to the single track, and started across, rolling his wheel along on the ties. When he left the solid earth and picked his way across the gaps in the trestle, it was a fearsome sight to look down at the boiling rapids far below. Still he screwed his courage to the sticking-point, and picked his way, measuring each step until he was well in the middle of the trestle.

His eyes had been busy with the gloom, try-

ing to find a foothold for his feet. Suddenly they were attracted by a light appearing ahead in the dark. It seemed that a star had bloomed, then it blossomed to a planet, and from that quickly to a moon. And then he knew it to be the dragon's eye of the 11:30 express sweeping down upon him! The trestle carried only a single track, and there was not room for him and his wheel at the outside edges of it.

There are far better places for a boy to be at midnight than the middle of a lofty railroad-trestle; especially when a lightning express, at full speed, is about to dispute possession with him.

The sight of the headlight that startled Quiz was followed at once by the increasing roar of the train as it swept upon him. After an instant of bewilderment he looked about for means of escape. "Maud S.," the champion trotter, could not have reached the end of the bridge in time to save herself, and for this boy, dismounted and trundling a bicycle with one tire punctured, there could be no escape that way. One glance at the turbid stream below showed that if he made a leap for life he would lose what he had leaped to save.

On the first impulse, Quiz was about to throw his wheel overboard and shift for himself. But the thought of the packet slung round his shoulders, and of his responsibility for its delivery in good time, dismissed that impulse.

There was but one thing to do—but one chance to take; and as he had been taking desperate chances from the beginning of his ride, he felt that he must take this one also. He stepped to the edge of the trestle, and knelt just outside the rails. Taking his bicycle by the crossbar he lowered it carefully over the side. It was a light racing-wheel and its

weight did not drag him after it. Grasping one of the ties with his left hand he cowered in a heap. He dared not look down at the rushing brook, for it made him dizzy. One glance at the express-train looming upon him like a fiery dragon was all he could endure. He closed his eyes; huddled himself together; waited.

Now he felt the fierce glare of the headlight upon him. Now there was a sharp shriek from the whistle. It almost sent him over into the stream. The fireman had seen him and had whistled: "Down brakes!" The engineer reversed the lever, and there was a great hissing of steam, a jangling of the bell, and a grinding of wheels on sand. But no power could have stopped the train in time.

Then on Quiz's ears the roar grew to a clatter of thunderbolts; the steam enveloped him; the scream of the brakes upon the wheels deafened him, and a sudden gale of wind almost swept him from the trestle.

But he hung to the wet ties, and hung to his bicycle.

And — after one dreadful moment — the express had shot past him and he was safe! He lost no time in wondering what the crew of the train would think when they brought the express to a halt and came back to search for him. But he gathered himself together at once, more frightened after the danger was past, than in its face; and set off along the track as fast as his trembling legs could carry him upon his course.

Near the end of the trestle, a road crossed the railway and ran down a hill into the town of Lakerim. Here Quiz bounded upon his wheel and coasted, caught the pedals at the very beginning of the level, and struck out for Lakerim.

At the outskirts of the town several of the Dozen met him and rode in with him, cheering him and marveling at his progress with lantern out, front tire punctured, and handle-bars askew. But Quiz had no breath to waste in answering idle questions. He bent far over and pumped away at the pedals with every pound of steam he could command.

And so he reached the square, where the next relay began. Here the champion of the

State awaited him and honored him for his noble work with the two words:

"Good boy!"

Well might he squander that much praise, for Quiz had made up all the time that was lost before him, and had brought in the packet five minutes ahead of his schedule. The next rider had no such obstacles before him, but a hard, level pike clear to the edge of the State, which promised still more gains upon the time-table.

Quiz, having surrendered the packet, fell from his wheel into the arms of his friends — and also into the arms of several reporters, who demanded what breath he had left to reply to their questions. They telegraphed all over the continent long stories of his magnificent ride. And Quiz woke up the next morning to find himself famous under his other name, Clarence Randolph,—for at least a day.

The next morning he also woke up to find himself summoned to an important meeting of the Lakerim Athletic Club. The Dozen met by appointment in the office of Mr. Clinton Mills, a young lawyer who had just "hung out his shingle," and had more time to spare than he knew what to do with. He had taken a great interest in the actions of the Dozen, and had invited them to talk over their club-house scheme.

When the meeting had been called to order by President Tug, and Mr. Mills had taken the floor of his own office, he said:

"Boys,—I mean Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Lakerim Athletic Club,—ahem! ahum! Your President has been kind enough to permit me to interfere in your affairs. I understand you are looking forward to having a club-house of your own. As I understand it, you are trying to earn money enough by your games to build this. I do not know whether or not you have thought how expensive a proper club-house will be; how much the land will cost, and all the gymnastic and other furnishings. I don't know whether you have thought how long a time it is going to take you to earn all this money.

"But if you have thought, you must know that it will be at least three years before you will have money enough laid up to start work."

At this point twelve faces lengthened dis-

mally, and twenty-four eyes looked at one another in dismay. The boys had never stopped to think all these things through.

"Besides, fellows—er—gentlemen," Mr. Mills went on, "when you have all your money together it takes a great amount of time to have plans drawn up and contracts let and building under way. And then it takes months and months to get the work done. Now, I suppose you have all been taught that running into debt is a very wrong and unwise thing to do?"

Twelve heads nodded solemnly.

"On the contrary," Mr. Mills said with equal solemnity, "it may sometimes be bad policy and very unwise not to run into debt. It all depends upon the reason for your borrowing. If you borrow something to spend on things you do not need, you are doing a thing both foolish and wicked. It is doubly hard to be deprived of necessities in the future to pay for needless luxuries of the past, and you will soon believe that all money borrowed foolishly is paid twice.

"But debts wisely contracted are the foundation of all wealth. Ninety per cent. of the business of the world is done on a credit basis, and only ten per cent. on a cash basis. Now, there is a way for this club to start the building of its club-house immediately, and to build a house costing thousands of dollars, in spite of the fact that you have in your treasury only—how much is there in your treasury?"

"Five hundred and fifty-two dollars," said Punk.

"You have earned, then, about \$550 in five months. A completely equipped club-house will cost you something like \$3500, and take months or years to raise. Now, the thing I would advise you to do, gentlemen, is this: Make some arrangement with your architects and builders by which they will take liens and mortgages on your building for security. What money you have can go as a first payment for land, and you can start work at once. By very active exertions you ought to have your club-house under roof before the first snow flies. I shall be very glad if the club will accept my services to draw up all the legal papers free of charge, and to do anything else I can."

When Mr. Mills sat down, History proposed a vote of thanks, but Jumbo leaped up and

moved three cheers, which the whole club seconded, and thirded, with yells. When order was restored it was soon voted to place the legal affairs of the club in the hands of Mr. Mills, who was to act as trustee, since all the boys were minors and could not own property.

Sawed-Off rose to say that as his father was an architect he felt sure he could get the plans drawn up for nothing, or next to nothing, and Jumbo suggested that his father having a lumber-yard would undoubtedly sell the club timber at the lowest possible rate. Other boys had fathers in other businesses where discounts would be of advantage, and Mr. Mills capped the climax of enthusiasm by remarking that the city was not using a certain tract of land on which had stood a school-house, now discarded for a newer and better building in another part of the town, and he thought it not impossible that the city officials could be persuaded to deed this to the club for its purposes. Or perhaps, the association of business men seeing the advantage to the town of having such a club-house, would buy the site from the city.

With this, the meeting broke up in high glee. Every member promised to do what he could at once.

A few days later another meeting was called to consider an invitation from the Greenville Academy to take part in a tournament of field and track athletics. Charleston and Greenville had been defeated so often by Lakerim that they were in favor of admitting Lakerim to the Tri-State Interscholastic League. But the rest of the academies, as I have said before, objected to admitting a mere high school into their circle.

The field-day of the League was not far off, and every academy was holding preliminary trials for the selection of a team to represent it.

Greenville was courteous enough to invite the poor frozen-out Lakerim Club to join them in a special tourney. For the Dozen to contest with a whole academy looked rash, but they had a mettle for everything in the line of sport; and they were not yet ready to take in any other Lakerim boys. So they determined to make what showing they could.

Every moment of liberty they could take from their school-hours they spent in practice. The

runners raced to school with an eagerness and a speed that might have led their teachers to think they were just a little bit fonder of their studies than they actually were. They raced home from school with a delight that did not exaggerate their gladness to be out.

The jumpers bounced around town like kangaroos. The hurdlers had many a bruise from trying to leap fences that were too high. The walkers went about the streets like badly jointed puppets. The hammer-throwers broke more than one fence, and bruised more than one shin. The shot-putters displaced all the big boulders in town. The bicyclists made the staid villagers "humph" themselves, as Mr. Kipling says, at all the street crossings.

The Dozen ran, jumped, threw and whizzed till long after dark, and so strictly kept training that the town of Lakerim never saw so few pies consumed.

On a fine spring Saturday, behold a merry crew from Lakerim threatening the peace of the town of Greenville. The quarter-mile track in the academy grounds was rolled and sprinkled. The grand stand was gay with ribbons and flags to which were attached beaming men and women, boys and girls. Inside the quarter-circle there were all sorts of traps and contrivances, not to mention umpires and referees, feeling almost as big as their badges.

Most important of all was a human calliope, who announced the results of the contests in a voice that began like a trumpet and ended like a kazoo.

The first affair was the Mile Walk. Next to the motion of a one-legged hen or a dog with a sore foot, a walking match is probably the most ungraceful thing ever seen on earth. So the Greenville people put it first, that they might have it over with. There were three Greenville men and three Lakerim men entered for the walk, and the only good thing that can be said of it was that it was awkward enough to be funny. Otherwise the four laps would have put the audience to sleep or driven them home. Around the track the six hunched and crawled, doing more work for less speed than anything but a man on a treadmill.

A long-legged Greenville man, who struggled along as if he were lifting his feet out of soft

tar at every step, got away with the rest from the start. Puck labored after him, but lost ground constantly, and in the last quarter had the pleasure of seeing another Greenville man crawl past him for second place.

This gave Greenville eight points to Lakerim's one; the first man scoring, of course, five points, the second man three, and the last man, one point, throughout the contests.

The second event of the Greenville program — which, for several reasons, was not according to the usual order — was the Mile Run. Reddy and Heady had entered for it, and also Tug. The twins got away together, and, their caps being soon blown off, they looked like the flaming brands of one of the ancient torch-races. Tug followed close after them, and three Greenville men were bunched at his heels. Greenville allowed the twins to set the pace for the first lap, and then one of their three shook himself out and came to the fore. This sprint was too much for Tug, who had trained for the Quarter-mile Race, and who felt it wisest to drop it and save himself for that event.

Reddy and Heady alternately pushed ahead of Greenville, and alternately fell back. After see-sawing thus into the home stretch they went at the track hammer and tongs, but the Greenville man drew ahead of both with ease, and the only thing for them to do was to fight it out between themselves for second place; for they had the other Greenvillians well distanced. The Greenville champion reached the wire first without difficulty, and after him Reddy and Heady flew, each vowing that the other should not beat him. Which one won is doubtful, for human eye could not see the difference between their noses. But there was no need of a decision, for whichever was second, the other was third. Score: Greenville, 13; Lakerim, 5.

And now came a Hundred-yard Dash. There were no preliminary heats to be run off, and all depended on this one fraction of a minute. Lakerim had its hopes bent upon Pretty, and he crouched over the line like a lynx; but his ears were so quick that he heard the shot before it was fired. He gave a great lunge and was down the track like the wind. He did not heed the yells that greeted his mistake, but flew



120-yd. Hurdle

on till Sawed-Off ran out and headed him off at the fifty-yard mark. But he had spent his first strength, and when the pistol was actually fired, he was late in that all-important thing, the start.

It was beautiful to see him running. Wavering neither to the right nor to the left, he sped like an arrow straight for the bull's-eye.

The Greenville sprinter, however, had too good a start, and bravely as Pretty gained on him, it was a Greenville breast that carried away the string. Bobbles was a poor third, and



Putting the Shot



Lakerim had to content itself with four points where it had felt sure it would win at least first place. Score: Greenville, 18; Lakerim, 9.

"They 've got us beaten," said Sleepy, dolefully.

"Never say die," said Tug, grimly.

"They 're easy," said Miggs of Greenville, Class of '00.

"Too easy to make it interesting," said Boggs of Greenville, '01.

The fourth contest was a Half-mile Run. Sawed-Off, who was the best all-round athlete of the Dozen, could run like a stag, for all his height and weight, and was the chief hope of Lakerim. Just to prove his right to a position in an athletic club, the diminutive History had actually entered the race, to the secret amusement of the Twelve, and the open merri-



FOUR EVENTS FROM THE FIELD CONTEST.

ment of the audience when he took his place at the starting-point, and assumed a violent posture that made him look like a pocket athlete.

"He 's slower than molasses in January," said Jumbo to Quiz.

"Still, I don't know," said Quiz. "He may get around once while the others are making it twice, and come in to the home stretch with the best of 'em."

He was more of a prophet than he knew. For History, having read somewhere of the wisdom of starting slowly on a long run, began at a gait just about fifty per cent. slower than that of the other runners. Furthermore he lost his spectacles, and had to grope around in the dust for them, and after that a shoe-lace broke and he must needs halt, make a knot in it and tie it up again. He was almost run over by the five sprinters, who had circled the course once and caught up with him when he was not halfway around his first lap.

History had a vague idea of making a bold dash when he had finished the first lap, and he set off again after the disappearing runners at an easy jog. Then a sharp stitch in the side caused him some trouble and he rested a moment. To his intense surprise, when he looked round before starting away again, he saw a Greenville man leading a thin line of runners straight for him to the home stretch. It dawned upon History that he would have to be an express train to get within the possibility of winning the race.

Then a great idea came to him. In his Latin class he had been much impressed with the story of Nisus and Euryalus as Virgil tells it. He saw Sawed-Off laboring along close after the Greenville man, but too far behind to stand much chance of winning the first place. History had an inspiration, as he called it, for proving that American friendship is as strong as Greek.

Just as the Greenville man reached his side, History pretended to slip; he lurched over against Sawed-Off's victorious rival, and brought him to the ground, falling heavily with him. The Greenville man was as wrathful as he was amazed, and kicked out wildly, landing one foot in History's stomach, and

scraping off those all-important spectacles with the other.

A yell of rage went up from the Greenville audience at the downfall of their champion. They were not near enough to see that it was all a contemptible trick, or History might not have got off with so little damage as the loss of breath and spectacles.

When Sawed-Off reached the scene of the downfall, he was too magnanimous to go on and take the prize that was now so easily in his grasp. He stopped and helped the disgusted Greenville to his feet. The other contestants also stopped as they came up, and the race was evidently to be run over. As History saw the outcome of his plot he began to see how despicable such tactics are, and how little profit they bring. So he went back to his books, a sadder and a wiser boy.

The fifth contest was a Two-mile Bicycle race. When Quiz seated himself upon his wheel, which Tug held for him, Lakerim thought of his fame and plucked up a little courage. Then the Greenville bicyclist took his place, and he was so much longer of leg, and rode a wheel so much larger, and towered over Quiz so threateningly, and had such a record of victories, that Lakerim's heart fell again. Punk was the only other representative of the Dozen.

At the signal the five men rode out quite leisurely. The champion Greenville bicyclist soon turned into the pole and took the lead. He set a space meant to be heart-breaking, but Quiz hung to him like a tender. He spurted a stretch. But Quiz always held his position just at his back, and after him came Punk.

So they went around the track four times, until the first mile was done. And then the Greenville man was tired of being pace-maker, and slowed up to let Lakerim take the lead. But the two from Lakerim slackened their speed and declined to move up ahead. The Greenville wheelman tried to force them to pass him, but they modeled their speed on his, and for two laps more the bicyclists fairly crawled around the track until the audience roared in disgust.

Now the Greenville rider felt that he had

regained his breath; he put "spurs to his steed." With increasing velocity he then wheeled away until all the seventh lap was passed, and half of the next one. And then—there is no telling exactly how he did it—Quiz was suddenly out from his place and alongside his rival—was ahead of him and, swerving to the inner side of the track, had taken the pole!

The Greenviller accepted the challenge, and came alongside in his turn, and away they flew like two stormy petrels skimming the sea. Around the curve they churned at a fearful slant. Neck and neck they dashed toward the wire, evenly placed, as if their wheels were locked side by side. But somewhere in his lungs and legs Quiz found a pound of reserve strength; and with a furious heart he drove it hard into his pedals, and crossed the wire half a foot in the lead!

Several yards later Punk crossed the wire, and the Lakerimmers let loose the cheers that they had packed away in their breasts. The score looked much better for them now as 21 to 15.

It looked better still when the tedious Broad Jump, after many narrow escapes, went to B. J., who, on his third trial managed to leap one eighth of an inch farther than the best distance the Greenville men could make.

Lakerim won the third prize also, thanks to the violent efforts of Punk. Score: Greenville, 24; Lakerim, 21.

The seventh event was the 120-yard Hurdle. Pretty and Jumbo were Lakerim's only entries in this event, and long practice had trained them just to take the cream off a hurdle, as it were, without touching it. But there was one Greenville man who had the same art. At the snap of the pistol Pretty and he got away together. The first yards before the first hurdle they ran at exactly even speed, and over the obstacle they went as one. Then Pretty proved best on the recovery, and reached the next hurdle first and took it alone. The third and the others also were his, and he soared over them like a greyhound on the hunt.

But the last obstacle he misjudged, and struck it with his toe, not hard enough to overturn it, yet hard enough to disconcert him, and to retard him for that fatal fraction of a sec-

ond, which means everything in a short dash; and when he entered the clear space he found the Greenville man at his side. Then there was a struggle that stirred the heart. Shoulder to shoulder the two boys sped, and when both made a desperate leap at the line, each faction of the spectators thought its man had won.

All Greenville howled with delight, and all Lakerim yelled in triumph. Those of the audience that were not partisans of either side found themselves screaming for both. No one had noted that Jumbo was the next man home; but every one crowded about the judges, gesticulating and demanding a decision for the favored man.

The decision was a victory for the Lakerim contingent; and when the judges, after consultation, unanimously agreed that Pretty had been a hair's breadth ahead of his rival, their joy knew no restraint. Elderly citizens slapped one another on the shoulder, and grew purple in the face, and the white-haired banker winked at the gray-bearded principal of the High School. The mothers of Lakerim were waving their handkerchiefs, and the girls were screaming almost as loud as the boys.

27 to 27!

There is a beautiful balance about such a score that appeals to every artistic mind.

But hope received a shock when the next contest, also a Hurdle Race, of 220 yards, gave Greenville 8 points to Lakerim's 1; for Bobbles could not make better than third place, and neither Reddy nor Heady could beat out the other Greenville man.

With the score at 35 to 28 it was evident that the contest was to be again a stern-chase, which, as every one knows, is a long chase.

On the Pole Vault B. J. showed a knack for playing monkey on a stick to such an extent that the Greenville ape could not squeeze himself over the crossbar where B. J. left it, though twice he broke a bar in the attempt.

Punk proved the importance of winning even third place, and in his steady, cautious way added one point to the Lakerim count on the pole vault.

The score now stood 38 to 34.

And Lakerim looked to Sawed-Off and his strong triceps for further gain.

In putting the shot straight from the shoulder the boy shoved the heavy cannon-ball out into space with a vim that should have driven it into the middle of next week. It hardly went that far, but, on the last put, it thudded the ground at a point out of all reach by Greenville muscles.

One of the Academy men was a bad second, and Tug was a fair third.

When Lakerim saw the Greenville score once more within sight, it sent up three whole-souled cheers for Sawed-Off. Score: Greenville, 41; Lakerim, 40.

The High Jump was unfortunately placed too close to the Pole Vault, but since the Dozen had to appear in more than a proper number of events, to eke out their small numbers in the face of the larger numbers the Academy had to offer, there was nothing to do but set the weary but plucky B. J. to work again.

Leap as he would, he could not wriggle over the mark reached by Greenville, and after three vain trials had to rest content with second place. And there was no Lakerim man to take the third. Score: 47 to 43.

But in the 440-yards Run Tug acquitted himself nobly, and took his place among the ranks of 5-point winners.

Sleepy, realizing that he was of little value in a spurt, set the pace at a high rate, which left all but two of the contestants behind, so that when Tug and the Greenville man by a score of feet. There was nothing further passed him on the home stretch he won third

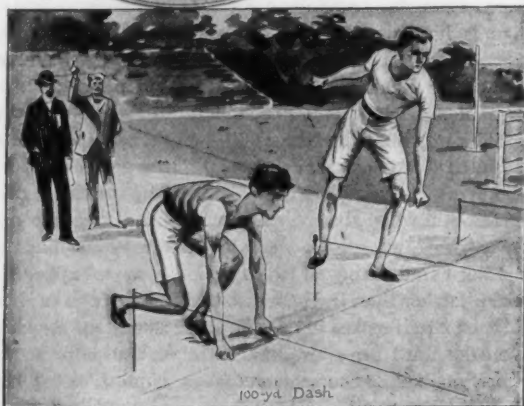
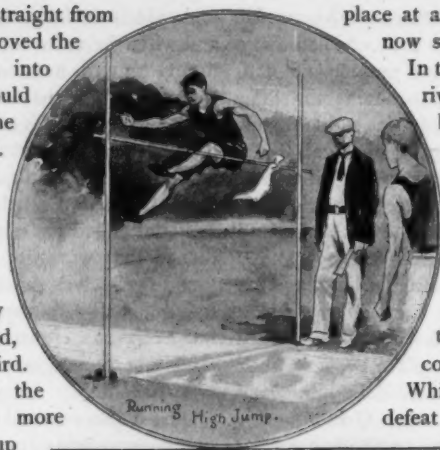
place at an easy trot. The score now stood: 50 to 49.

In the 220-yard Dash Pretty's rival had his revenge, and beat the Lakerim men handily, but since Jumbo was a good third, his victory was not fatal to Lakerim hopes.

The Dozen still saw in the score of 55 to 53 some reason to believe that the steady Sawed-Off could win the day.

While Pretty was meeting defeat upon the track, Sawed-

Off was bringing dismay to the hearts of all the Academy hammer-throwers. Sawed-Off had taken a hint from a Western school-boy, who had seen



fit to make a variation on the old style of hammer; instead of the stiff rod he used a flexible wire for a handle, and got much advantage from it. He whirled this about his head with terrific force, and sent the hammer flying out into space in a beautiful arc. Beginning gradually he passed the successive marks of the Greenville men, until one superb throw caused the man who ran out with the tape-measure to look twice and gasp with astonishment, for Sawed-Off's throw had hurled the hammer 155 feet $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, which broke all the records of the League

Sawed-Off maintained that his hammer came within the rules, and was a proper improvement on the rigid handles previously used. The judges could find nothing in the laws against it, but there was so much grumbling in Greenville that Sawed-Off seized the hammer used by their champion, and, ordering the crowd to flee for their lives, waved it about his head and sent it into space from the catapult of his whole body.

It went so much farther than the best Greenville record that there was no more wrangling.

But Punk, in whom Greenville had placed hope for at least third place, had failed to equal even his practice record, and Lakerim's heart sank at the score — 59 to 58.

Then they were beaten after all!

But suddenly one of the judges remembered that the postponed half-mile race had not yet been run over. Sawed-Off was the only man Lakerim could count on for a good place in this run. For Tug, in leaping high in air to celebrate Sawed-Off's great hammer-throwing, had come down with his ankle awry, and strained it so badly that he must needs be helped off the field.

Here Lakerim was in a fine plight with its first runner worn out and its second disabled. Sawed-Off, however, insisted on going into the race, and while Jumbo was diplomatically engaging the judges in a discussion that delayed the start to the last possible moment, Sawed-Off was screwing his courage to the sticking point.

The Greenville man, who had shown himself Sawed-Off's superior in the first trial, had run recently in the 220-yard dash, and he was too short-winded to be at his best. Sawed-Off on the other hand, was one of those natural athletes that thrive on exercise and grow stronger after a hard struggle. He set so tight a pace that the Greenville man was dizzy before the first lap was over, and in the last quarter was so breathless that he fell out in spite of the wild encouragement and protests

of his coaches. While Bobbles was winning an exciting race for second position with a Greenville man, Sawed-Off crossed the line at a walk.

And the final score stood Lakerim, 64; Greenville, 60.

It will need no affidavit from me to convince you that the Lakerim Athletic Club misbehaved itself in a most undignified manner and felt itself inhumanly happy at the discomfiture of its rivals. Home they went in the Lakerim carryall, their voices reduced to mere husks from their much yelling, and their muscles almost wearier with cavortings than with athletic labors.

Sawed-Off was placed upon the seat with the driver — the nearest thing to a throne the boys could find.

So home they drove, the two horses tugging and straining at the bits in their eagerness to be in their stalls again, and the driver too sleepy to give them proper attention. The carryall took one or two curves on two side wheels.

Of course the crisis came just at the top of a steep hill. A sudden bolt of the horses snapped the lines out of the hand of the driver, and he wakened from a doze to see his uncheckable steeds taking the long hill down which Jumbo had coasted into fame, at a furious gait that meant a certain smash-up if they could not be checked before a sharp turn at the foot of the incline. Immediately the cowardly driver yelled to the Dozen to save themselves; and jumped.

The boys in the carryall, hearing the driver's cry of terror, craned their necks to see the danger that threatened them. Sawed-Off's quick backward glance showed him that the driver, as he struck, must have broken some bones if not his neck.

The boy found himself alone on the driver's box, the reins dangling out of reach, and eleven of his friends dependent upon him for their safety, perhaps for their lives.

(To be continued.)



OUR BEST THREE RIDERS.

TWO BIDDICUT BOYS

And their Adventures with a Wonderful Trick Dog.

By J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

[This story was begun in the December number.]

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHAT WAS HIDDEN IN THE MANGER.

THE last trick of the trick-dog had surprised Cliff at a moment when he was so full of trouble that in his despair he had exclaimed, "Let him

go!" and cared little if he never beheld Sparkler again. What disappointments, what fatigues, that wily and treacherous animal had caused him!—and now had come this acme of the boy's woes, this horrible uncertainty as to what had befallen his faithful friend Quint. Nevertheless, even in his wretched state of mind, it was a matter of interest that Sparkler had gone

back in the direction from which they had come — the way Cliff must now return.

He called again; he explored the ground all about, under the trees and on the corners of the intersecting roads; he looked in every direction in the vain hope of seeing a human figure start out from the shadows; then with a heavy heart he turned back toward the shed.

He had but a flickering hope of finding that Quint had reached there, and it died within him before he had fairly passed beneath the roof. He called Quint's name and kicked the heap of straw; for although Cliff's friend was foremost in his thoughts, he also remembered the bare possibility of Sparkler's having gone back again to that comfortable bed. But then neither the dog nor his friend made sound or sign in that solitary shelter.

He stood gazing up and down the road, when he perceived a light. It was evidently in motion; it was approaching in the middle of the highway. The moon's beams reduced its rays to a feeble glimmer

and soon revealed a man carrying it; a stocky man, in a buttoned frock coat, and wearing a round-topped hat.

Cliff watched his approach and drew back

into the shed to wait, filled with a fearful hope that the coming of the man with the lantern somehow concerned him and Quint.

Arrived at the shed, the man turned into it, and holding up the lantern where Cliff stood in the shadow, cast its light upon both their faces. His own was that of a ruddy, Americanized Irishman — our friend Terry, in short.

"Are you the boy from Biddicut?" he inquired, peering at Cliff curiously.

Cliff had already noticed that the stocky man wore the uniform of a police officer.



"'LL HOLD YOU THIS TIME, IF I LIVE!" CLIFF EXCLAIMED JUBILANTLY."

"The other Biddicut boy sent you?" he answered eagerly. "Where is he?"

"Down at the police station," the officer replied. "He has had a rough time. He was

troubled about you, and so I offered to come and find out about you."

Cliff anxiously inquired of the officer what had happened to the other boy from Biddicut.

"Nothing very serious," Terry answered. "Only he caught your dog-seller, and had a set-to with him. But he stuck to him, and brought him to the station."

"Oh, Quint! — he 's great!" cried Cliff, rejoicing too quickly.

"'T was a fine piece of strategy," Terry admitted. "But at the last moment the rogue turned the tables on him by a cunning trick and got away."

"Oh! — how could he?" Cliff wailed.

"I'll tell you on the way back. We 've made your friend pretty comfortable, and he wants you to join him. You have his hat? I was to look for that, as well as for you."

"To think," exclaimed Cliff, "that he should have caught Winslow and I should have caught the dog, and that both should have got away!"

He was explaining how Sparkler had found him on the straw there, when he paused in amazement at sight of an object revealed by the rays of Terry's lantern. It was a piece of most familiar-looking cord, hanging over the side of the manger. He sprang to seize it.

"The lantern! hold the lantern!" he cried, slipping his hand carefully along the cord toward some object to which it was attached.

Terry lifted the lantern, and exposed to view,

curled up in the bottom of the manger and pretending to be fast asleep, but doubtless as wide-awake as any four-footed creature could be, the thrice-lost Sparkler! — Sparkler, wisest of dogs,



"A DARK FIGURE, SLOWLY, AND WITH THE UTMOST CAUTION, BEGAN TO DESCEND."
(SEE PAGE 581.)

yet not wise enough to know it was a short-sighted and ostrich-like policy, in hiding, to leave the piece of cord trailing at length behind him!

"I'll hold you this time, if I live!" Cliff exclaimed jubilantly. He fastened the cord about his wrist.

Sparkler seemed reluctant to leave the manger, but Cliff forced him to take the leap.

"What 's this, do you believe? He was guarding something," said Terry, lowering his lantern so as to shed its light into the vacated manger.

Sparkler, seizing the officer's coat-tail, tugged at it with a menacing snarl.

"Sparkler!—behave!" Cliff commanded. "See what it is. I'll hold him."

Terry thereupon fished up a curiously-shaped roll, which fell open in his hand, and assumed the shape of a flat, empty bag; Sparkler growling, and springing to get at him.

"That 's Winslow's!" cried Cliff, in high excitement. "It 's his gray linen grip-sack! I understand the whole business now!"

As the officer was mystified, the boy briefly explained.

"He followed Winslow as long as he carried that. It might be a roll he could put into his pocket, or it might be a bag with his duster in it. But if he left it anywhere, then the dog knew he was to meet Winslow at that place, or wait for him there. He had come back to stay with the bag when he found me here."

"If that was the scheme," observed Terry, "then your man will return here. Leave the bag just as we found it."

"It must have been covered with straw; I got all of this litter out of the manger," said Cliff. "Now let 's have it all back, and put out the light, and leave everything till my partner and I can come in the morning and waylay the crafty Mr. Winslow."

XXV.

WHAT CLIFF CARRIED IN HIS POCKET.

SPARKLER had become quiet after the bag was returned to its place; and he followed readily when Cliff led him from the shed and set off, guided by Terry, down the road.

"What time is it?" Cliff inquired.

The officer pulled out his watch and turned its white countenance up to the moon.

"Twenty minutes to nine."

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"No later?" exclaimed Cliff. "Will any stores be open in the village?"

He explained his purpose, and on entering the village Terry took him to a store where small articles of hardware were retailed. He laid Quint's hat on the counter and inquired:

"Have you any copper wire?" Some samples being shown, he selected one that was sufficiently light and flexible, and said, "Cut me off three yards of this."

The piece obtained, he made one end fast to the dog's collar; then passed the rest in a long spiral around the entire cord, including the loop at his wrist. The two men watched him with interest, giving him such assistance as he required; but Sparkler looked sleepy and indifferent.

"He may gnaw the cord, but I defy him to bite off the wire! How much is to pay?"

As he said this he thrust his free hand into his pocket, and drew it out again with something that might have been silver or nickel, but was n't money.

"What 's this?" he muttered; and it was a moment before he recognized the shining object he had picked up near the spot where he found Quint's hat. He had not since given it a thought; indeed, he had hardly been conscious of slipping it into his pocket in the moment of surprise when Sparkler got away from him. Examined in the lamplight, it resembled less the part of a knife-handle, which he had at first taken it for. It was in shape a long oval, about three inches in length by nearly three quarters of an inch in width; thin and slightly curved; on the innermost surface were two short rivets. The outer surface was brightly polished, with rounded edges, and it bore an engraved inscription.

Cliff held it up to the light and read the lettering, with a face betraying the utmost astonishment, his eyes staring and his lips forming an inaudible exclamation. Then he flung himself upon Sparkler, as if with intent to throttle that unconcerned and impassive quadruped.

His immediate business, however, was not so much with the dog as with the dog's collar, a strap of maroon-colored leather, studded with nickel studs about an inch and a half apart,

except in one place where two studs seemed to be missing.

With hands trembling in their eagerness, Cliff applied his metal plate to the space thus left, and found that it not only fitted, but that the rivets corresponded exactly with the two rivet-holes in the collar.

He sprang to his feet, unwilling to tell any one of his discovery until he had imparted the tremendous secret to his friend. "What will Quint say," was the thought uppermost in his mind, as he accompanied Terry to the station.

The door was wide open, and within sat Quint with his back to the stove, and his coat and vest hanging near it on the office railing. On the stove were two bowls containing hot chocolate, and on a stool beside him was a tray containing a comfortable repast for two,—boiled eggs, as white as the saucer that held them, a loaf of bread, butter and salt, knives and spoons and plates. The air of the room was warm, despite the open door, and humid from the vapor of steaming garments.

This banquet set before him must have been tempting to the tired and hungry boy, now quite recovered from his faintness. But Quint was unwilling to taste food until his friend could partake of it with him.

The appearance of Cliff at the door, with Sparkler capering before him, very nearly proved disastrous to the contents of the tray, which Quint's knee knocked in his sudden attempt to rise. Fortunately he caught it, and steadied it on the stool.

"The dog?" he cried, his face lighting up joyfully. "Cliff, you've beaten me! I'm glad one of us has had some luck!"

"Don't say luck till I tell you," replied Cliff, in gleeful agitation. "Whether it's luck or not, I don't know. But it's great!" And he held out the metal plate.

No common adjective seemed strong enough to express Quint's astonishment as he read the inscription; but the famous words of Brutus, which he had so often spouted, broke from his lips with a force of feeling he had never put into them before:

"Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts! How did you come by that?"

"See how it fits," said Cliff, pulling Spark-

ler forward, parting his curls, and showing the place in the collar, which the plate and the rivets fitted. "I found it near your hat, up there in the woods. I feel certain Winslow must have lost it."

"And I know just how he lost it," exclaimed Quint.

"May I see?" asked the Chief.

"Yes, you can see it," said Cliff, passing the name-plate over to the chief, who read the inscription with delighted curiosity.

"*P. T. Barnum!*" he exclaimed. "*'Bridgeport, Conn. License 373.'*" Thunderation, young fellows, that's Barnum's celebrated circus dog! He's worth a thousand dollars!"

Cliff stroked the spaniel's head affectionately.

"If he belongs to Barnum, Barnum must have him back again, I suppose. I only wish he was mine! Now tell about your tussle with Winslow, Quint."

"Begin your supper, boys," counseled the chief, "and tell your stories over your eggs and chocolate."

"That's judgmental," observed Quint.

XXVI.

HOW THE BOYS FOUND SUPPER AND LODGING.

"SUPPER? our supper?" said Cliff, eyeing the contents of the bowl and tray with an interest which the more exciting question of the moment could not wholly eclipse. "How is that?"

"We sometimes have to feed a prisoner, and your friend here came so near to being one, that I thought we owed him a treat. He'll tell you about it; or perhaps Terry would prefer to. Eh, Terry? Well, lay to, boys, before the supper gets any colder."

He placed a second chair for Cliff, opposite Quint's, with the tray on the stool between them, and handed them the chocolate. Hungry, happy, grateful, they cracked their eggs and told their stories, while Terry, kneeling before the open stove-door, toasted slices of bread for them on a fork.

Quint in his narrative cast no blame upon the officer, but called it a "very natural mistake," and took his slice of crisp toast from the friendly hands that prepared it, ate it with im-

mense relish, declaring they "would have Winslow yet."

"He will certainly go back to the shed for the dog and his bag," he said; "and we must be there to nab him, very early in the morning, if we don't go to-night. I am getting dry, and rested. How is it with you, partner?"

"My little nap in the shed was almost as good as a night's sleep," Cliff replied. "Then there was a good deal of the right kind of medicine in catching the dog, finding you all right—and such a supper as this! I could start for home, if there was any hope of reaching it in three or four hours."

As that was out of the question, the chief offered to find lodgings for them in a house near by, where their supper had been ordered.

"You are kindness itself!" said Cliff. "But we can turn in for only a little while; and I must n't be parted from this dog."

"Then allow me to make a suggestion," said the chief, between puffs of his cigar. "We've got a couple of cells downstairs, and they open into an airy room. Unoccupied—no bedding—straw mattresses—rather thin, but clean. You won't find 'em bad to sleep on; and you can keep the dog with you."

Cliff shrugged and lifted his eyebrows at Quint. Quint smiled his drollest smile and looked quizzically at Cliff over the devastated tray.

"It will be enough for me to brag that I've had on a pair of iron wristbands," he remarked. "If it should get to the boys in Biddicut that I'd slept in a police-station I would n't answer for the result. I'm afraid some of 'em would die of envy."

The chief laughed as he knocked the ashes off his cigar, while Terry stood by and grinned.

"If we could get into a barn somewhere and put in three or four hours' sleep on the hay," said Cliff, "that would be better than going back to the shed before daylight."

"That would suit me," said Quint. "I've more than once slept in a barn in summer, just for fun. I'm getting dry enough."

He put on his vest, but held his coat to the fire for a turn or two, while Cliff offered the fragments of their repast to Sparkler. At first the dog had declined food, and he now winked

at it somewhat contemptuously as he lay curled up by the stove.

"If you had spoken about the barn a little earlier I might have managed it," said Terry. "Deacon Payson's barn," with a consulting glance at the chief. "May be I can now. The deacon is usually up later than this."

As the boys welcomed this suggestion, Terry, with the chief's approval, went out to see what arrangements could be made. In his absence the boys talked over their affairs with the chief and got his advice as to what they should do if they found Winslow, and what if they did n't, and as to their best course in regard to the dog that had in so strange a manner come into their possession.

Then Terry returned and said, "It's all right. Deacon Payson's haymow will accommodate you."

He relighted his lantern, Quint put on his coat and shoes, and Cliff, with a pull of the wire-wound cord, woke up Sparkler, who had been dozing by the stove. Then the boys shook hands with the chief, who wished them luck, and promised them further assistance, if they should require it; and they departed, preceded by Terry carrying his lantern, and followed by the dispirited spaniel.

A little way up the street, Terry knocked at a door, which was opened by an old gentleman in shirt sleeves.

"I've brought my young chaps, Mr. Payson," said the officer, stepping aside and holding his lantern so that his "young chaps" could be seen.

The old gentleman looked them over and fixed his eyes on Quint.

"I thought so," he remarked. "I've seen one of 'em before. Have n't I?"

"You were in the crowd around the hot box this afternoon when I was inquiring for a man and a dog," Quint replied, glad to recognize the kindly face.

"Terry tells me that you want to sleep in my barn," said the old gentleman. "I'll be with you in a second."

He stepped back into the room, and reappeared putting on his coat, then he led the way along a path lighted by the mingled rays of the moon and of Terry's lantern. Having

unlocked a stable door, he took the lantern from Terry's hand and preceded the others, past a stall in which there was a horse lying down, into a well-filled barn beyond.

"Here 's hay right here on the floor," he said, "and I can get you blankets."

"If it was my case," said Terry, "I should get up on this load of hay. Here 's a ladder a-purpose. Then you 'll be out of the way of rats."

Quint surveyed the premises with satisfaction, and said he was n't afraid of rats.

"Particularly with the dog to watch us," Cliff added, laughing. "He 's good for almost everything else; he ought to be death on rats! I believe he smells 'em now."

Sparkler was, in fact, sniffing about excitedly, putting his nose in the littered hay, whining, and finally setting his forefeet on a round of the ladder, with a wistful upward look, as if he understood and approved Terry's suggestion.

"The dog votes for the top of the load," said Quint; "and I 'm not so sure but that will be the best place for us. It may be the safest for him, if he is going to try any more of his tricks."

"You mean, if he gets away from me!" said Cliff. "He is n't going to do that, I tell you! But if he should, he 'd find his way down from that load quicker than you or I could!"

"I guess the best place is right here on the floor," Quint concluded. "'T won't do any harm to pull down a little more hay, will it?"

"None at all," Mr. Payson replied. "And here are some carriage cushions."

"Quint, this is luxury!" said Cliff.

"Cliff, this is judgmatcal!" replied Quint. "We would n't ask anything more comfortable, if we had our choice of lodgings."

"I wish our folks could know!" said Cliff. "How are we to get out in the morning?"

"I shall have to lock you in," Mr. Payson answered; "but if you are stirring before my man comes round, you can open this big front door from the inside; I 'll show you how the swivel-bar works. Or you can unbolt the door in the rear. Unless you start too early in the morning, my folks can give you some breakfast."

"If you want any help from us, you 'll find the station open," said Terry, "I 'll post the night-officer, so there 'll be no more mistakes at our end of the line."

The boys had made their bed between the side of the load and the front door, and were preparing to lie down in their clothes after kicking off their shoes.

"Come here now!" Cliff commanded, making Sparkler lie down by his side. "He heard us talk of rats, and can't forget it." He took the precaution to make a couple of turns with the leash about his arm in addition to the loop at his wrist. "Even if he should get loose, I don't suppose he can get out of the barn."

"Not before the doors are opened," Mr. Payson replied, regarding his guests with amused satisfaction. "I should say that you are pretty cozy."

With an exchange of good-nights, the men went out with the lantern; and the boys found themselves alone on the floor of the great, shadowy, moon-visited barn.

"I don't know how to thank folks," said Cliff. "Somehow, when anybody has been good to you, any words about it sound foolish."

"We have had more kindness shown to us than anything else on this trip," Quint replied, "even putting Winslow and the old cook into the opposite scale."

"I 'm thinking," said Cliff, "we 'd better let Winslow slide. Now that we have the dog, we can make enough out of him to pay for the trouble."

"I 'm rather surprised at you, Cliff," Quint answered, after a moment's silence. "Just after we started on this expedition, and it was growing a little mite interesting, you 'd have given it up two or three times, if it had n't been for me."

"I 've wished we had given it up more times than that," Cliff confessed. "Think of what you have gone through! Such a wetting as you got, and the trouble the rascal gave you, up there in the woods—let alone his turning you over to the police! It makes me laugh, though, to think of that!"

"We 'll laugh at the whole thing when we 're safe through it," said Quint. "May be we sha'n't get much satisfaction out of Algernon, in

one way, even if we catch him. But as I owe him for the wetting, *and* the broken head, *and* the cold wrist-bands, not to mention other small items, I want to pay him in a lump, and get his receipt in full. In short, I mean to get even with Algernon K. if it takes another day to do it."

Cliff made no reply to this declaration, which suggested such possibilities of still further hardships and disappointments. Quint waited a minute, then went on in a tone which betrayed how deeply hurt he was by his friend's silence:

"You have the dog, and now you naturally want to hurry away with him. That's all right, Cliff; that's the important thing to you. The important thing to me is the bear-hug I am saving up for Winslow. This may be a weakness on my part; and I've no doubt the course you propose is the wisest. But if I don't get in that squeeze, I shall feel a want, as if I had missed something useful and agreeable, all the rest of my life."

"I feel just so too," Cliff replied. "Although we've secured the dog, I never shall feel quite happy about it unless we get Winslow. But I'm doubting whether the chance of catching him is worth what it will cost."

"We can find that out only by making the trial. Just give me a little help in the morning," said Quint; "then if we don't scoop him in, and if I should feel like sticking to his trail a little longer, I'll go ahead on my own account, and let you start for home without me."

Cliff reached over and gave Quint's arm an affectionate grip.

"See here, Quint," he said; "don't misunderstand me. Remember what Cassius says — 'A friend should bear a friend's infirmities.' I've played that part to your Brutus too many times, to have a disagreement with you in earnest."

"Oh, it's no disagreement!" Quint protested.

"The fact is," said Cliff, "I was used up too soon on this tramp. I have n't anything of your tremendous 'stick-to-it-iveness'; and I — but no matter!" choking a little. "You've been such a friend to me — you've helped me to get the dog, which is your dog now just as much as he is mine; and now I'm going to

help you overhaul Winslow again, no matter how long it takes; and you won't hear me say another word about turning back as long as you want to follow him."

"Cliff! you're the pluckiest fellow I ever saw!" Quint exclaimed; and the boys' two hands were clasped in a hearty pressure. "Pluckier than I am!"

"Don't be absurd!" Cliff remonstrated.

"I mean it!" said Quint. "You have stuck to this business when you've seen it would be wiser to give it up. I am a little more obstinate than you are, that's all. And now you offer to give up your wisdom to my obstinacy. Well, I think we've a good chance of trapping Winslow in the morning. We must stop talking now and get some sleep."

"I forgot you did n't have a nap, as I had," said Cliff. "I feel as if I could talk all night. Is n't it pleasant in here! — the moonlight slanting in at that window, and striking down over the stalls! Sparkler is sleeping, as quiet and contented as the most honest dog in the world."

Quint made no reply, and his heavy breathing soon showed that he was asleep. Nor was it long before Cliff succumbed to blissful drowsiness, and slept soundly on their bed of hay, between his friend and the dog.

The moonbeams mounted higher and higher over the stalls, and sent their radiance through the racks, as the great, slow, solemn, starry wheel of night rolled on. The last fading yesterday joined the countless yesterdays of the past, and another untried morrow was at hand.

Then a dark figure crept to the edge of the load of hay, put one foot after the other on the rounds of the ladder, and slowly and with the utmost caution began to descend.

The dog gave a whine and a start, tightening the cord about the arm at his side. Cliff roused instantly, put out his hand, felt the dog's head, and patting it, told him to lie still. His eyes opened enough to see that only a few feeble flecks of moonlight rested high up on the partition, and that all was quiet in the deepening gloom of the barn. Then he slept again.

During this slight disturbance, and for some minutes afterward, the figure on the ladder remained perfectly motionless against the side of the load. Then it put out a hand in the direc-

tion of the dog, and waved it with an expressive downward gesture. From that time Sparkler made neither sound nor movement; the wary feet felt their way down the ladder, and Algeron K. Winslow stood upon the barn floor.

XXVII.

"WHAT MAN-TRAP IS THAT?"

STANDING so close to the load of hay that he might have been taken for a part of it, the dog-seller contemplated the situation. He had slipped into the barn when the owner was bedding down his horses the evening before, found a lodging on top of the load, and had been, no doubt, highly edified by the conversation of the two boys on the floor below. Now the time had come for him to anticipate their well-laid plans by some shrewd action.

Quint's prominent features were distinctly visible in the dim, diffused light. His face was pale, and the shut eyelids with the discolored bruise on his temple gave it a sad and stern expression even in sleep. He lay on his back, with one relaxed arm on his breast, the other outstretched on the blanket, and with his shoes and hat beside him on the floor.

Nearer the silent standing figure lay Cliff, turned over on the arm to which the cord was attached, with his face toward Sparkler, curled up close by on the hay. Cliff's hat and shoes were under the corner of the load, at Winslow's very feet. All this the keen eye of the observer took in, even to the slender, serpent-like coil of gray cord about the dark sleeve.

He looked at the great door, then down at the legs in his way, and the eyes that would open, if they opened at all, upon any object moving in that direction. Thanks to overhearing Mr. Payson's explanations, he had knowledge of another door in the rear of the barn. He stooped to give Sparkler a quieting caress, and to look into his slyly blinking eyes, then glided away to make discoveries.

With movements so furtive that if they had been heard, nothing more than the presence of mice on the littered floor would have been suspected, he passed the load of hay, groped his way around the carriage beyond, and found the door he sought. He had no difficulty in slip-

ping the bolt without noise, and in opening the door a little space, to see that his way of escape was clear. It was bright starlight without; the moon was near its setting, if not already set.

Leaving the door open a good arm's-breadth, he stole back toward the front of the barn, observing every turn, and every obstacle to be avoided in any precipitate retreat. Within half a yard of Cliff's head, he got down upon his hands and knees, under the corner of the load of hay. It was darker now, and the faces of the sleepers were indistinct in shadow, but their steady breathing reassured him. He advanced his hand until he felt the cord.

He took out his knife intending to cut it, but something harder than hemp stayed his blade. Wire!—a long flexible piece encircling the cord, and extending from a small loop at the dog's collar to a larger one at the boy's wrist.

Upon making this discovery he was minded to cut the collar, but the boy was sleeping so heavily that he decided to unbuckle it. This he did without difficulty, and having freed it from both cord and wire he put it into his pocket.

He was now ready to depart and to take the dog with him; but he must first devise some means of delaying pursuit. He crept by the cushions that pillowed the boys' heads, and reached until his groping hand touched Quint's shoes. These he took, with the hat, and creeping back, placed them beside Cliff's hat and shoes. He was now ready for his last most ingenious device, which he could n't think of, even at that critical moment, without a chuckle of delight.

"Since he's so determined to hold something, I'll oblige him," he whispered facetiously to himself, as he carried the released end of the cord toward one of the wagon-wheels, meaning to make it fast to the rim. "He sha'n't wake up and feel he has been wasting his time!"

But that very large substitute for the dog's collar was too far away to permit a turn of the cord to be taken about it, without a coil or two from Cliff's arm; which could be had only at the risk of disturbing his slumber. Winslow

thereupon produced from his pocket another piece of cord, which he had not found it necessary to part with, and was about to cut off enough for his purpose, when another happy thought struck him.

"No use being mean about a little string." His position, kneeling on the barn-floor, was becoming irksome; and having knotted his cord to the end of Cliff's, he rose to his feet. Then, instead of tying it to the wagon-wheel, he put it through the wheel, and made the end fast to the ladder, quite at his leisure. "To make things lively for 'em, if they start off in a hurry!" was his amiable intention.

So far all was well, from his own point of view; although our boys, if they had been awake to the situation, might have regarded it differently. He was prepared to resume his career in a gullible world, and only one other slight precaution remained to be taken.

He would have stolen their clothes if that had been possible. As it was, he could make free only with their hats and shoes.

The hats, one after another, he tossed up on the load of hay, where they lodged noiselessly. All this time the dog had lain as still as the sleeping boys; but now, at a signal from his master, he crouched on his paws, alert and intelligent, awaiting orders. Then in one hand Winslow gathered all the shoes except one; this he gave to Sparkler to carry, and with that too faithful accomplice, stole away, as silent as the shadows amid which they passed.

And still the tired Biddicut boys slept on.

At this juncture an astonishing thing occurred.

As Winslow approached the door, which he had left unlatched and slightly ajar, he was startled to see it swing all at once wide open, as if moved by an unseen hand. He stopped, half expecting a human form to appear in the square of star-lit space suddenly confronting him. But all was strangely quiet, and it seemed for a moment as if the door had opened magically, of its own accord, to let him pass.

The mystery was quickly solved; a wind was rising, and it had carried the outward-

swinging door around on its hinges. He foresaw what might happen next, and hastened forward to prevent it. But he was too late. A counter-gust swung the door again, shutting it with a loud, rattling bang.

An indescribable hubbub ensued. The boys started up with cries of amazement, demanding of each other what had happened.

"It was a door that slammed!" exclaimed Quint.

"Somebody has been in the barn!" cried Cliff, feeling hurriedly for the dog.

"Where in thunder are my shoes?" Quint roared.

"The dog! the dog is gone!" said Cliff, in wild consternation. "He's here, though!"

He was on his feet, following up the cord, which was certainly attached to something, but which seemed to be miraculously lengthened, as if it had grown in the night.

"Jehu! — what's all this?"

His hand encountered the wired knot that had clasped Sparkler's collar; but instead of the collar he found more cord — more cord!

"The old Harry has been here!" he wailed, in mad bewilderment.

"It's the old Winslow!" said Quint. In springing up he had struck his head a stunning blow against the projecting frame of the hay-wagon. But without heeding the hurt, or waiting to find his shoes, he started for the door that had made the bang, and which was now slowly swinging open again.

In his headlong rush he passed between his friend and the load of hay.

"Look out!" Cliff implored. But Quint kept on, plunging over the cord, dragging Cliff after him, and bringing the ladder down upon both their shoulders. If Winslow had remained to witness the unqualified success of his scheme for "making things lively" in the deacon's barn, he would have had no cause to complain of the result.

"What man-trap is that?" muttered Quint, as he scrambled off, freeing his legs from the cord and his back from the encumbrance of the ladder, and made for the open door.

(To be continued.)

THE AUCTION.

BY JANE ELLIS JOY.

"Who 'll bid for a sneer?"

Said the auctioneer.

"It gives to the lips a fanciful curl,

Is equally suited to boy or girl.

How much? Twenty-five?

Twenty-five, do I hear?

Good folks, be alive!

'T is a genuine sneer."

But it brought only five.

"Here 's a frown of high grade,"

Said the auctioneer now;

"The best thing ever made

For contracting the brow.

It darkens a face as bright as a rose,

And wrinkles the forehead above the nose.

Nineteen? Nothing more?

Do I hear twenty-four?

Going, gone — at a score."

A sweet little smile,

Like sunshine in May,

Started after a while

At ten, then away

Into hundreds it mounted; nine hundred
and two;

Then into the thousands the swift bidding
flew.

"Do I hear? Do I hear?"

Bawled the hoarse auctioneer;

"Going, gone!" And it went to dear little
Annette,

And it proved so becoming she 's wearing
it yet.

THE JAGUAR AND THE CAYMANS.

BY ROBERT WILSON FENN.

AMONG the curious doings of animals I have seen, none interested me more than that observed by me one night on the banks of the upper Magdalena River in Colombia, South America. We were camped on the margin of a little creek not far from where its waters mingled with those of the river, and at a point far from any villages or houses.

We had finished our evening meal, and I was enjoying my customary smoke under the *toldilla*, or netting, and chatting with my Indian companions, when, suddenly, the most awful series of catcalls that I had ever heard disturbed our peace and the night air. A prolonged yowl, like the united voices of all the cats on all the roofs of a large town, made the cold chills creep up and down my spine and gooseflesh to run all over me.

"What is it?" I asked one of the men. "*El tigre, señor!*" (The tiger, sir!) he re-

plied; "*va a pasar el río*" (he is going to cross the river). "Let him cross if he wants to," said I; "but why does he want to upset my supper and spoil my after-dinner smoke with his hideous noise?" "Come and see, señor," he replied, and, taking up his gun, motioned me to follow him. Softly we crept along the margin of the creek toward the river, and making our way through the spines of the overhanging bamboos, came out upon the narrow beach near the mouth of the creek.

Sure enough, by crawling cautiously along in the shadow of the bluff, we saw our musical friend squatted on his haunches, with head thrown back and mouth open, emitting the most blood-curdling serenade one could expect to hear, and looking for all the world like a gigantic tabby cat. But what connection such a noise could have with his passage of the river I failed to see.

"Anastasio," I said in a whisper, "does n't the foolish fellow know that he will draw all the alligators together, and when he gets into the water he will swim off in sections?" "Leave him alone," chuckled the Indian; "he knows how to get across." So, crouching down in the bushes on the bank of the river, we waited for his next move. I think we must have been there about twenty minutes or half an hour, and I was becoming almost worn out with the attacks of the mosquitos, when the concert suddenly ceased. At the same moment the

over their eyes, but all ready for their expected prey.

But they were to be disappointed this time; for the jaguar, immediately upon the conclusion of his serenade, started off up-stream as hard as he could run along the bank of the river, and when he had gone about five hundred yards dropped softly into the water and swam safely across, while his baffled enemies were unable to make fast enough time up-stream against the swift current to get him.

I had been so interested in watching this

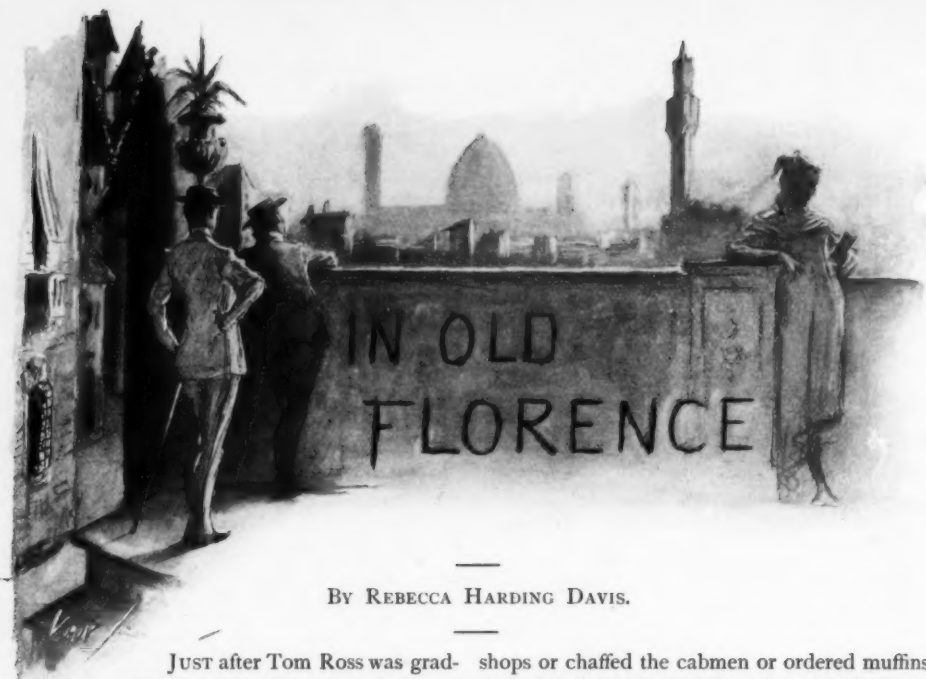


THE JAGUAR'S CLEVER TRICK TO DECEIVE THE CAYMANS.

moon came out clear and bright from behind a cloud, and Anastasio, nudging my arm, pointed to the surface of the water in front of the jaguar. At first I thought there were a number of sticks in the water, but as the current was swift and they were motionless in their places, I was for a moment puzzled. "*Caymanas*" (alligators), whispered the Indian, and I saw that his eyes were better than mine. There were the ugly snouts of half a dozen of the big fellows, some well out of water, and some just showing their nostrils and the bumps

little performance that my chance for a shot was gone; but, in fact, I hardly begrudged a whole skin to such a clever trickster.

What I cannot yet understand is how the jaguar learned his part. Did he reason it out, or did his mother teach it to him as she had learned it by seeing some relative dragged down by the hungry jaws of the saurians? I subsequently learned that it was quite a common trick with the jaguars, although it is but seldom one has so good an opportunity to see it as was given to Anastasio and myself.



BY REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

JUST after Tom Ross was graduated at the Freetown Academy he had the grippe, and instead of going to college was ordered to shut his books for a year and rest. His father sent him to some cousins in Italy, who promised that he should live cheaply there and "learn some things which books could not teach him."

Tom, when he sailed, remembered this as a funny idea. What could an American possibly learn from the "Dagos," or any "worn-out race in Europe?" Young as he was, he hoped to teach them something, for Americans, of course, were ahead of all nations in civilization, and surely Freetown had all the newest American ideas.

Hence Tom arrived in Florence in quite a glow of missionary zeal.

But after a few days in that ancient city he forgot that he had come to Americanize it. He found himself in an odd state of mind. It was something like the doze which he would steal in the morning at home after he had been called, when he could hear the noises in the house and smell the coffee, and yet would go on talking to the queer people in the queerer country of his dream.

Now, as he strolled with his cousins to the

shops or chaffed the cabmen or ordered muffins at the English bakery, the narrow street between him and the cabmen would seem to fill with a crowd of fighting Guelphs and Ghibellines, in the armor of the dark ages; and Lorenzo the Magnificent and Michelangelo passed him in the shadow of the grim, gray fortresses that darkened the daylight overhead. Here was Dante's poor little house, and the stern poet himself climbing with tired steps the narrow stairway. Yonder in the great Plaza a wisp of smoke rose. Tom thought of Savonarola burning at the stake.

"I can't rid myself of old times here," he said to his cousin. "Now, in Freetown, nothing goes back of thirty years. There is a tavern out on the pike where they say Washington slept once. It is a hundred and forty years old, but Freetown is brand new."

"Tell me about Freetown," said Hugo eagerly. Hugo was always eager about anything that interested Tom. He was half Italian and had his mother's dancing dark eyes and gurgling laugh and soft voice. "Cousin Hugo," Tom wrote in one of his first letters to his family, "is a boy not as big as I am, but he is as gentle and polite to beggars as to women. He has what you call the manners of the Old

School. It must have been a fearful job to drill them into a boy."

It was no drill that gave Hugo this manner, but the Tuscan blood in him, friendly and sympathetic. The boys, as they talked, were walking slowly along the broad Corso on the bank of the Arno. On one side was a line of stately old dwellings, while on the other the dull green stream crept lazily by, under ancient bridges, past the Medicean palaces and the gray, mossy towers, where once Boccaccio sang and Galileo watched the heavens. Tom looked at the river with cold disapproval. Where were the steamboats, the coal scows, the mills on the banks?

"Lots of water-power there going to waste," he said at last. "Seems to me your river is n't of much use."

"Why, it carries the snows of the Apennines to the sea," said Hugo.

"Oh, I beg your pardon. I do see the chimney of one factory yonder."

"Yes," Hugo sighed, and shuddered. "But you need n't look at it. Keep your eyes on

You will find that odor nowhere but in Florence."

"He values a smell more than a factory!" Tom thought, bewildered. But certainly the fragrance was delicious and the flowers —

"I never saw flowers before!" he exclaimed.

The flowers were everywhere; heaped along the stone foundations of the old houses; heaped in baskets, on carts, on the steps of the churches; masses of white lilies, of great crimson roses, of lilacs, of golden acacias.

"The town has been called the 'City of Flowers' since Julius Cæsar's time," said Hugo.

It was late in the afternoon and the air was full of a soft golden haze. A long procession of carriages and horsemen passed along the Corso, going to the Cascine. The boys halted under the shadow of the Corsini palace, Hugo bowing and smiling to his friends as they passed while Tom sharply inspected the horses, the liveries and the crests on the panels of fine carriages.

"Who are all these people?" he asked.



"BEHIND HER WAS A MASS OF RED ROSES." (SEE PAGE 588.)

this shore. Do you notice a strange, oily fragrance in the air to-day? It comes from the olive-trees and grapevines on the hills yonder.

"Oh, every kind and all kind," said Hugo. "That stout man is a French artist. He is known all over Europe; that pale young

man driving the four-in-hand is the Prince of Naples: some day he will be our king; that handsome boy on the pony is the last of the ancient Venetian family of the Foscari. You remember the doges of that race?"

"But, oh, look!" cried Tom, interrupting him with a cry of delight.

A light landau drawn by white horses came near. In it was a beautiful woman in a soft creamy gown, and behind her on the top of the carriage was a mass of red roses making a frame for her lovely smiling face.

"It is Cinderella going to the ball!" cried Tom; "such an odd, daring thing to do!"

"It is an every-day custom here," said his cousin. "Look!" Many landaus and basket-wagons passed, their pretty tenants made picturesque by this background of flowers. The prettiest of all was one filled with soft-eyed Italian children in their white airy dresses, and their *bonne* in

val," said Tom. "And you have it every day!"

"How many people smile and bow to me, Hugo!" he said presently. "I don't know them."

"Oh, I should have told you!" said Hugo. "Our etiquette is different from yours. Every cabman who has once driven you, every tradesman who sells you a paper or a cigar, every *portier* who has opened the door of a friend's house for you, is always afterward your acquaintance. You are thought ill-bred if you do not return his bow and his *buon giorno* when you meet."

"We would not do it in America. And yet you are not 'born equal' in Florence."

"No," said Hugo shyly. "We are born friends."

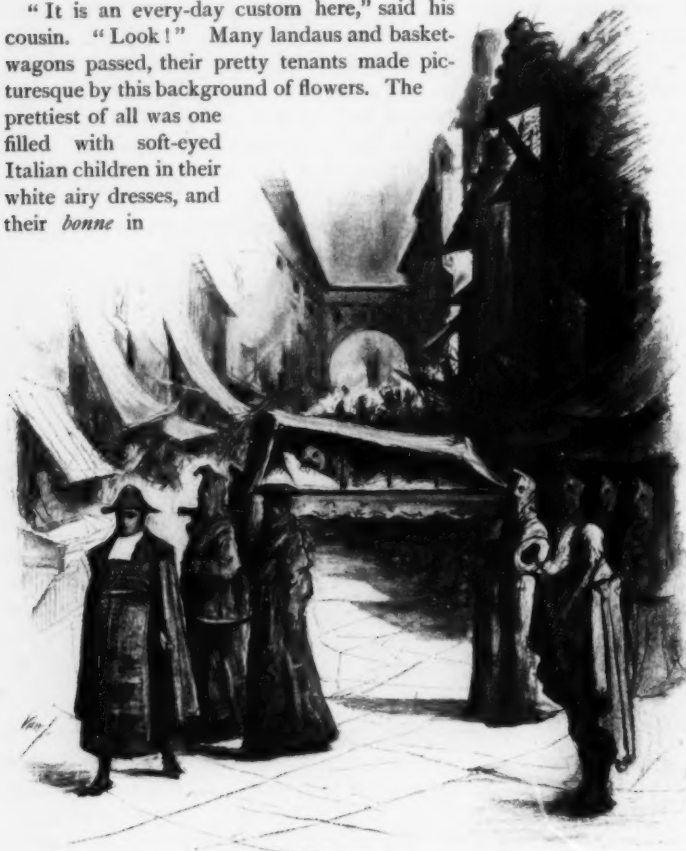
"What did that beggar say just now when I told him to clear out?" said Tom uneasily. "I did n't mean to be rough with the fellow."

"He said 'I thank you, Signor. Another day, perhaps.'"

"Even your beggars are courtly," said Tom. "Folks here take time to be kind and gay."

"But are folks not kind and gay in America?" asked Hugo in surprise.

"Oh, they feel all right, but they have n't time for ceremony and fuss. We're a busy people," Tom said with an air of importance. "There's lots of money to be made over there in America."



THE BROTHERS OF PITY CARRYING A SICK MAN TO THE HOSPITAL.

yellow satin jacket and cap, the group fenced in with golden roses. "It is like a Flower Festi-

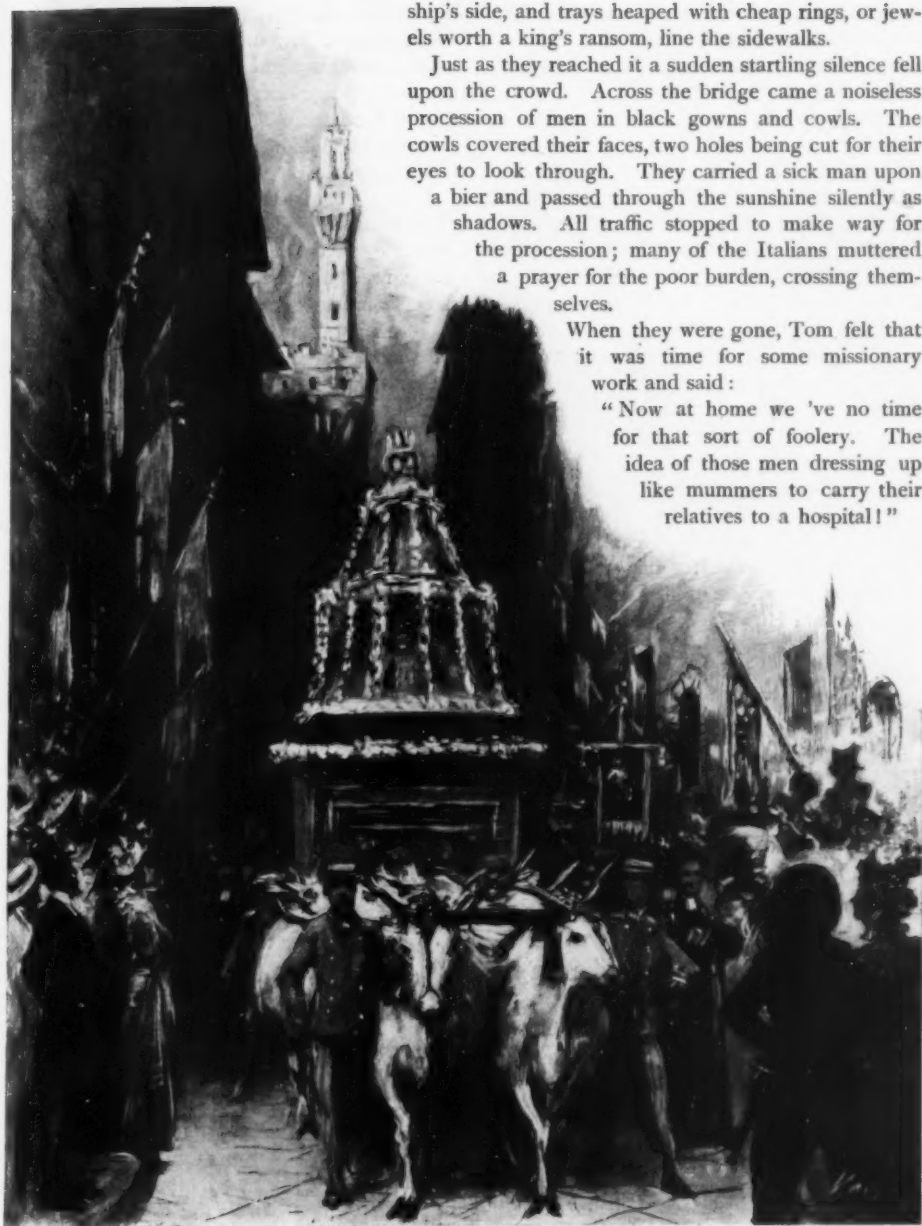
They were passing, as he spoke, the entrance of the Ponte Vecchio, a bridge, gray with age,

ship's side, and trays heaped with cheap rings, or jewels worth a king's ransom, line the sidewalks.

Just as they reached it a sudden startling silence fell upon the crowd. Across the bridge came a noiseless procession of men in black gowns and cowls. The cowls covered their faces, two holes being cut for their eyes to look through. They carried a sick man upon a bier and passed through the sunshine silently as shadows. All traffic stopped to make way for the procession; many of the Italians muttered a prayer for the poor burden, crossing themselves.

When they were gone, Tom felt that it was time for some missionary work and said:

"Now at home we've no time for that sort of foolery. The idea of those men dressing up like mummers to carry their relatives to a hospital!"



CARRYING THE SACRED FIRE FROM THE DUOMO TO THE HOME OF THE FAZZI.

which spans the Arno. Rows of goldsmiths' shops cling along its edges like barnacles to a quickly. "They are not his relatives," said Hugo. "It is not mumming. You don't

understand. It was a boy, like us, who started the work six hundred years ago. He said every Christian man should be ready to help every other man—to nurse the sick or bury the dead, without reward or praise. He and his companions were called the Brothers of Pity, and the Order has been at work here in Florence ever since. All kinds of men belong. They never talk of it, but they are ready at a moment's call. They wear the black gown and hood that nobody may know them or praise them for their charity. Those men who passed just now may have been laborers or great Florentine nobles. Only God knows them."

"How are they paid?"

"Paid? They are never paid. They can take nothing from those they serve but a drink of cold water."

"And that thing has been going on for six centuries!" said Tom. "*We* tire of things in six years! Besides, an American pays taxes to support an almshouse for paupers. He does not nurse and bury them himself."

"No," said Hugo, gently; "the methods are different. I suppose we seem like children compared to the wide-awake Americans. But these old customs were invented to teach us great truths before we could read or write, just as you show a child pictures to teach him things. We keep them still. Now, to-morrow you can see the queerest of them all—the Flight of the Dove."

"What dove?"

"It is an old story. I know only bits of it." The boys were strolling home through the narrow dark streets.

"You ought to have electric lights here," said Tom stumbling. "You should see Broadway at night."

"In the old time they had only torches," said Hugo. "Those stone rings on the walls of the Strozzi palace yonder held torches. Only nobles have them on their walls. The higher his rank, the more light a man had to furnish to his neighbors. I wish I had been a Florentine then!" he exclaimed excitedly. "I'd have been a prince in one of these palaces with torches blazing on my walls, and long lines of retainers always standing armed, ready for battle, and great poets and artists

like Tasso and Michelangelo in my court. Fights every night, and processions every day, when I brought home a picture or statue. All of the great princes brought back treasures then to Florence. The best things in the world were not good enough for their dear city."

"But you forget the dove," suggested Tom.

"No. That is the story of the bringing back of a treasure—the best. A crusader from Florence saw the light in the Holy Sepulchre, and vowed that he would carry the sacred flame home to his own city. Three times he set off with the torch. The wild beasts fought him, and the storms beat on him, and the winds blew against him. Three times it was put out, and he had to turn back. At last he hid it in his bosom, and rode backward on his horse and so protected it. The people thought he was mad seeing the ridiculous figure facing the horse's tail, and called out, "*Pazzo, pazzo!*" (Fool, fool!) But he did not care. He carried the holy light home to the high altar of the Duomo, and there it still burns to-day. His family have been known ever since as the Pazzi."

"That 's a good story," said Tom after a pause. "A sort of allegory, I suppose. But there 's no dove in it."

"Oh, the dove? Well, every year on Holy Saturday a dove, typical of the Holy Spirit, flies with a spark of sacred fire from the high altar of the Duomo to the Baptistry. The flame is then given to the Pazzi family, who carry it to their own little church. There is an old superstition, which many of the *contadini* or peasants still believe, that if the light goes out in its passage the crops will fail; so they crowd into the city from all Tuscany, to pray for the dove while it is on its way."

Tom heard that evening on all sides so much talk of *Lo Scoppio del Carro* (the flight of the dove) that he felt it was high time to begin his lessons. He would give these people some good, sound common sense to-morrow!

But ten o'clock the next morning found him with Hugo struggling madly through the masses of people in the plaza up the steps of the great cathedral.

It was a cold bright day. Since dawn the peasants from the neighboring provinces had been pouring into the city. Few of the higher

class of Italians were to be seen, but many Americans and English tourists, laughing and talking loudly, were crowding into the foremost

wearing gay handkerchiefs or black mantillas over their gray hair. They muttered prayers incessantly, their eyes uplifted, their fingers



THE FLIGHT OF THE DOVE. A FLORENTINE CEREMONY.

places. Close to these amused spectators in their London-made coats and gowns, pressed pale old women from the Apennine Mountains,

plaiting away at the straw braid wound in a ball which hung and joggled like a live thing in front of them. There were smart Italian

soldiers in the crowd in black and bright blue uniforms and the Bersigheri—their three-cornered chapeaux hidden by floating cock's-feathers—and contadini from the valleys of the Arno, some in long saffron-colored woolen smocks with collars and cuffs of wolves' pelts, and others clad in huge sheepskin cloaks and hoods. Countless processions of the "sodalities," or societies, marched into the Duomo, marshaled by priests in their black cassocks;

Duomo, who for centuries have sat pondering, gazing at the work they left on the earth.

"I never saw so great a crowd so silent and grave," said Tom.

"This is not a show," Hugo replied. "It is a religious ceremony. It has a solemn and sacred meaning to these people."

"Those rude tourists should be put out of the church," muttered Tom, frowning at a group of people who were talking and laughing.



"THEY SWARMED ABOUT TOM'S PONY, ASKING FIVE TIMES THE REGULAR PRICE." (SEE PAGE 594.)

processions of men with badges and staffs; of boys; of young girls, candidates for their first communion, in shimmering draperies of mauve or yellow, and airy floating veils; of little children with a white ribbon bearing a cross bound around their foreheads; of black-robed Dominicans; and bare-footed Franciscans in their coarse brown frocks.

When the great cathedral was full the vast crowd ebbed and flowed outside against the walls, beneath the Campanile, the great bell tower which shot up into the blue heaven like an airy shaft of carved ivory and gems, around the gigantic figures of the builders of the

"No matter!" whispered Hugo. "Watch now."

The music and chanting suddenly stopped. The people rose from their knees and stood gazing breathlessly up into the dome of the cathedral, in which the red sunset lights were fading into darkness. On the altar, high in the shadow, appeared a flickering spark. It wavered, brightened, almost died out. Then a white dove, scattering showers of sparks, darted from the altar, crossed the Duomo high over the upturned faces, and passed through the open doors across the square to the church of San Giovanni.

"It is there safely!" gasped Hugo. "If it

only comes back without going out the crops are sure for this year!"

The Duomo with its multitudes waited in silence. The peasants stood with strained eyes fixed on the door. Tom held his breath.

There was a flash of light at the door, again a shower of sparks overhead, and the dove fluttered back to the altar. With a great sigh of relief the entire crowd of people rushed to the doors.

When the boys reached the square Hugo dragged Tom up on to the base of Brunelleschi's statue.

"You can look over the heads of the people here," he said. "Do you see that great car hung with flowers, with a tower in the middle? That is a caroccio, an ancient Etruscan war-chariot. It, and the six white oxen you see without a spot or stain, belong to the Pazzi. Neither car nor oxen are used throughout the year except to-day, to carry the sacred light from the altar to the private chapel of the family. Ah! they have started! They are coming!"

The snow-white, stately animals marched slowly past, each led by a man in the Pazzi liveries.

The mass of people followed the car. Hugo and Tom turned into a narrow street, which opened into a quiet plaza.

One spring evening a few weeks later, Hugo, as he bade Tom good-night said: "If you can be up before dawn to-morrow, I will show you another curious old custom of Florence."

"What family does that belong to?"

"Oh, it is far older than any Florentine family—older than Florence itself. There are pictures on the walls of Pompeii which show that the custom was observed there. Nobody knows when the Pagans originated it; but we keep it up."

"Why should you keep up a Pagan custom?"

"Well, it has a pretty good Christian meaning," Hugo said, laughing. "The idea is that just as we are kind or cruel to animals so God will treat us. You take a grillo, one of the humblest of living things, a kind of field-cricket, and you put it in a cage, and feed and take care of it. The common people believe that the longer it lives the better will be your share of

good fortune in the world. Get up early enough to-morrow, and you will see."

"All right," said Tom, yawning as he lighted his candle.

Dawn was breaking the next morning, as the boys mounted their horses, and rode out to the Cascine. The night still gathered over the somber palaces and red roofs of the town; but the river creeping through it glanced here and there with sudden sparkles, and shafts of white brilliance struck across the grayish green hills beyond, covered with olive groves and vineyards, to the snow-clad peaks of the Apennines that walled the horizon.

Early as it was the broad Corso Vittorio Emanuele was filled with a long procession of carriages, carts, horsemen, and crowds of men and women and children on foot. Even the babies were carried out to try their luck. All Florence, chattering and laughing gaily, was pouring itself into the Cascine, a beautiful park which lies on the bank of the Arno. Its roads are divided by green walls of trimmed trees, which break now and then, and through the breaks you see exquisite bits of landscape garden, or wild depths of forest, or wonderful glimpses of far valleys and mountains.

Nobody this morning, however, stopped to look at woods or gardens. The road was lined with countless stalls covered with tiny reed cages, painted red or blue. The venders held them up to the passers-by, shouting:

"Behold! The grilli! Only a lire! Buy while the dew is on them, if you would have good fortune!"

They swarmed about Tom's pony, asking the American, as usual, five times the regular price. Hugo hurried up.

"Choose a stout, healthy cricket, Tom," he said anxiously, "with the dew on it. It is all nonsense, of course, but one may as well have every chance. Put more green leaves in the Signor's cage, Luigi. Here is your money—no; no more—that is enough."

Luigi grinned. The crowd watched Tom put his cage in his pocket, as eagerly as if only that one cricket had been sold that morning, instead of thousands. Hugo lifted his hat as he rode away; and men and women called "Good luck!" to the young signori, one or two run-

ning after them to charge them anxiously to give water to the crickets twice a day.

The boys rode out along the river-road. When they turned back the sun was up. The Angelus was ringing in all of the church-towers of the city, and the air was filled with the soft clangor. The people were seated in groups on the grass, now drinking their café-au-lait, all eager, laughing and gesticulating vehemently.

"They make more of a feast out of a roll and a cup of black coffee than an American would of a dinner of ten courses," said Tom. "I suppose the reason is that the American is usually planning a bigger dinner for to-morrow."

"It must be tiresome to be forever planning for to-morrow," said Hugo. "For me, I always find enough to content me in the good things of to-day or yesterday."

Tom said nothing. Had the Florentine boy

after all some reason on his side? Was this tranquil content one of the things to be learned there by an American, which books did not teach him?

A hoarse croak startled him. He took the cage out of his pocket. The bulging eyes of the hideous black insect looked at him reproachfully.

"Oh, look here, you grillo," he said, opening the cage; "be off with you. Go home. I'm not going to earn good-luck by shutting up a cricket."

Hugo smiled feebly, and opened the door of his cage reluctantly. "It is the kindest way, after all, I suppose," he said.

The crickets hopped away, chirping loudly, into the woods; and the boys rode back gaily over the dewy grass and through the sun-lighted haze into the most beautiful city in the world.

A SPRING LESSON.

BY ANTOINETTE A. HAWLEY.

DID you see the Robin-redbreast
As you came to school,
Weaving threads and twigs and mosses
By the same old rule?
Blithe and busy,
Blithe and busy,
What a cheery bird is he!
Building such a cozy nest
For the one he loves the best.

Did you hear the Robin-redbreast
Singing at his work,
Laughing at the very notion
That a bird could shirk?
Blithe and busy,
Blithe and busy,
What a happy fellow he!
While the nest grows round and strong
As the notes of Robin's song.

Little folks know more than robins,
Try the robin's plan;
Every day, in storm or sunshine,
Do the best you can.
Blithe and busy,
Blithe and busy,
What bright children we should see,
If you all began to-day
Working Robin-redbreast's way!

CHARADE.

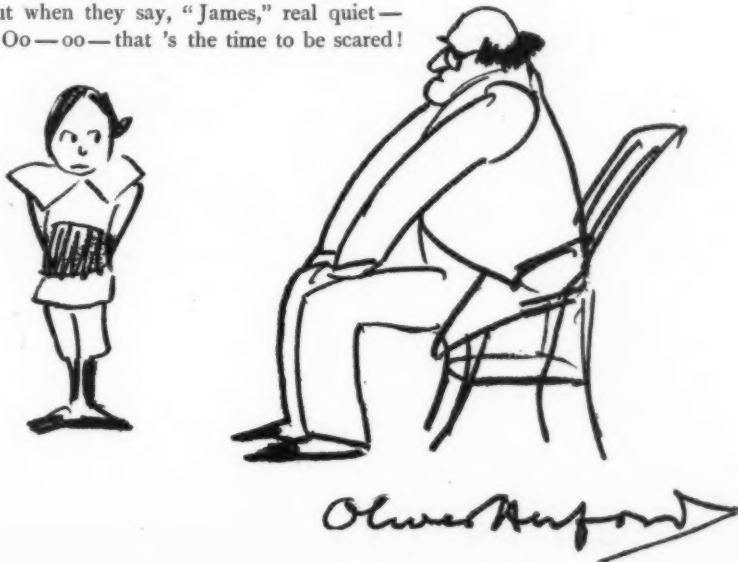
—
BY DORA READ GOODALE.
—

I PICKED up my second—'t was hammered with care
By a smith who had muscle enough and to spare—
And shall take it to-day to my first (if I dare),
With whom I am fain my good fortune to share;
But I feel that the moments by ages are reckoned
Until she has made it my first my second.
My whole, who never lives in town, is found there as a rule;
But first a man must drop a line to fetch him from his school.

ABOUT FATHERS.

—
BY JULIET WILBOR TOMPKINS.
—

WHEN fathers jump up and they holler,
"Here, Jim! you rascal, you scamp!"
And hustle you round by the collar,
And waggle their canes and stamp,
You can laugh right out at the riot—
They like to be sassed and dared;
But when they say, "James," real quiet—
Oo—oo—that 's the time to be scared!



AN APRIL JOKE.

By CAROLYN WELLS.

Oh, it was a merry, gladsome day,
When the April Fool met the Queen of May;
She had roguish eyes and golden hair,
And they were a mischief-making pair.
They planned the funniest kind of joke
On the poor, long-suffering mortal folk;

And a few mysterious
words he said,
His fool's-cap close to her
flower-crowned head.

Then he laughed till he made his cap-bells ring,
At the thought of the topsy-turvy Spring.
"T is a fair exchange," he said, with a wink —
"It is!" she said. And what do you think?
The flowers that should bloom in the month of May,
Every one of them came on an April day!
And they looked for April showers in vain,
But all through May it did nothing but rain!

HER "GLORY-PLANTS."



MADE a garden for my pet —
A little garden all her own;
With seeds of pink, and mignonette,
And morning-glory, it was sown.

Dear heart! she has one name for all —
Her "glory-plants" she tends with care;
And no one knows how big and tall
Her fancy sees them growing there!

The earth she waters from her cup
(I fear the seeds are drowned below);
A wistful little face looks up:
"My glory-plants — I wis' they 'd grow!"

The long May-days are fine and bright,
The buried seeds are all too slow;
She murmurs, — half asleep at night, —
"I wis' my glory-plants would grow!"

Edith M. Thomas.

THE LITTLE JAPANESE AT HOME.

BY IDA TIGNER HODNETT.

II. THE LITTLE JAPANESE AT SCHOOL.



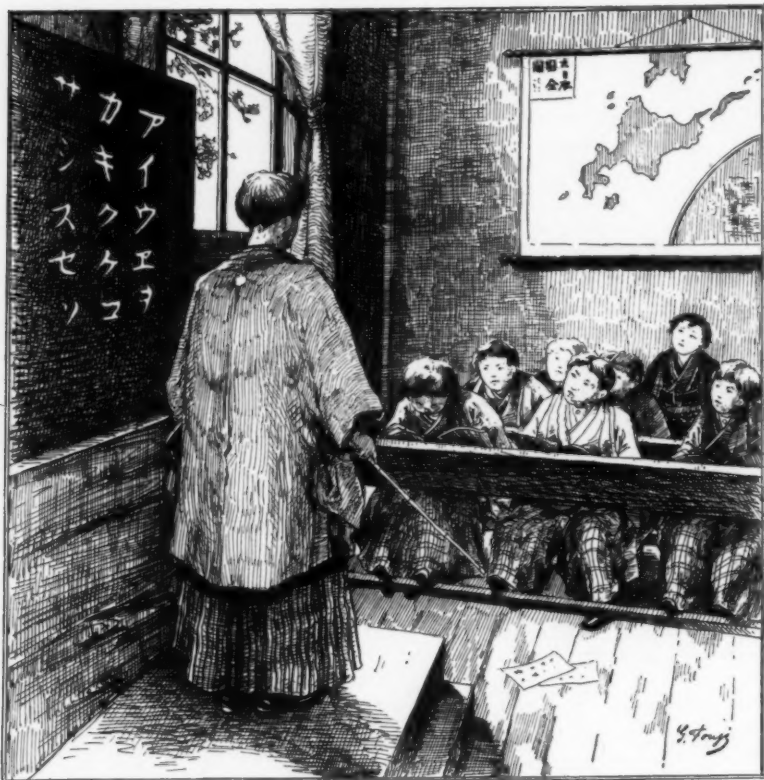
JAPANESE children used to sit upon their heels in the school-room, grouped round their master on the soft matting, chanting together their Iroha, or reading in concert the wise maxims from their readers which have been the mental food of countless generations of their race. A change has come, and now they sit on benches before desks in Western fashion, though they do not think this method of sitting very comfortable, and are glad on returning home to indulge in the usual squat. But they still recite in con-

cert, in a monotonous sort of chant, the Iroha (ee-ro-hah), which corresponds to our alphabet.

Under the former system of schooling, all Japanese children learned to read and write the Hiragana characters, and to calculate; and it was an unheard-of thing for a grown person to be unable at least to read and write, and do simple calculation. They were seldom sent to school before the age of seven, and were not hard pressed in their studies. In learning to write, they were acquiring the dexterity of finger and wrist needful in drawing, and without doubt their method of writing is one of the traits which have tended to make the Japanese a nation of artistic tendencies. A soft paper is used, and a brush instead of a pen. Care and exactness are necessary, owing to the nature of the materials, and it is impossible to use the hand in a cramped or stiff position; hence freedom and grace of movement result. The

child holds the paper in one hand and the brush in the other; the whole arm works, motion coming from the shoulder, elbow, and wrist as well as from the finger muscles. The

and foreigners, hearing the children's recitations, even though not understanding their speech, recognize that the young Japanese are getting some good results of modern civilization.



JAPANESE CHILDREN IN ONE OF THE NEW SCHOOLS.

paper, as soon as touched, absorbs the Indian ink with which he writes. The child thus finds it is necessary to touch with precision and care, and acquires insensibly a certain power of drawing in this precise touch and in the exercise of the arm and hand muscles.

Western principles in education as well as Western school furniture have been adopted in the Sunrise Kingdom. The Arabic numerals, 1, 2, 3, etc., are used; for the Japanese at once recognized the advantage of these signs for numbers instead of their own cumbersome ones. Maps, charts, diagrams, are seen on the school-room walls, object-lessons are given;

three quilts; so between the torturing beds by night, and the uncomfortable, because unusual, position of sitting by day, the poor students had a hard time of it. It was not wonderful that they thought the foreigners' ways absurd and barbarous!

In some country villages the children are summoned to school by the beat of a drum as early as 7 A. M. in the summer. As these villages consist of only one long street, on each side of which the houses are placed, the children are soon assembled at the master's dwelling, which is the school-house as well, to be dismissed to their homes at twelve o'clock.

In the government colleges the students eat food prepared in Western style, using knives and forks and spoons instead of chopsticks, and sleep on beds instead of on the matting. When beds were first introduced, in a few cases they were not supplied with mattresses, and the officials, ignorant that these articles were a necessity, required their unfortunate students to sleep on the hard wooden slats covered only by two or

JAPANESE GIRL LIFE AND SPORTS.

THE tenderness of Japanese parents is by no means confined to their boys. Girls receive an equal share of love and caresses, and have a joyous and happy childhood. The Japanese are seldom angry, and regard violent exhibitions of passion as degrading. In the management of cattle whipping is not employed, and they do not find it necessary to have "Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals."

The girl is named by her parents in the same manner as her brother. Family names have been in use for centuries, and these remain unchanged, but are used chiefly in the signing of writings, and not in the ordinary course of every-day life. The individual name chosen for a little girl is frequently that of some beautiful flower or other object in nature denoting grace and loveliness, or something of good omen. *Kiku* means "Chrysanthemum"; *Haru*, "Spring"; *Tsuru*, "Crane"; *Kana*, "Blossom."

At the family festival following her presentation in the temple, a number of presents are given to the little queen of the hour, and among them is a package of flax-thread, signifying wishes for a long life. The latter is given to the baby boy as well, and has no reference to needlework as a feminine accomplishment.

The head of the infant, like that of her brother, is at first shaved all over, until on the eleventh day of the eleventh month another festival is held, after which it is shaved

in only a few places, and the hair is allowed to grow in tufts. At the age of five years the shaving ceases entirely, and the hair grows long. Any other color than black is detested, and the greatest pains is taken to make the hair as deep and glossy a black as possible. It is naturally somewhat stiff, and a rich oil made from the seeds of the camellia is used to make it more manageable and to improve the gloss. When long enough the hair is braided, or arranged in a chignon, with narrow strips of scarlet or other bright-colored crêpe intertwined for festal occasions. The fashion of wearing the hair varies with the age of the girl, so that it is comparatively easy to tell ages by glancing at the style of hair-dressing. Long and highly ornamented pins of silver and shell are used by the older girls; and when married their coiffure undergoes a still further change, and becomes fixed. The maids of honor in a prince's household dress their hair in a fanlike coiffure.

The title of respect for a girl is the prefix *O*,



BATTLEDOR AND SHUTTLECOCK AS PLAYED BY JAPANESE GIRLS.

with the suffix *san*; thus, *O-Kiku-san* means "Miss Chrysanthemum." A married lady is

addressed as O-Ku-sama or O-Ku-san, which is probably very nearly like our word "madam"; or as the mistress of the house, she is called *O-Kami-san*. This means "the honorable mistress." The wife is not addressed by her husband's name, but, when spoken of, is mentioned as the wife of So-and-so-san.

The dress of the little girl is the kimono, made like that of her mother, both differing from the father's and brother's in being longer and fuller. In cold weather a jacket and pair of trousers of cotton cloth are worn underneath, and the kimono is sometimes thickly wadded. Among the nobles and gentry these additional garments are always worn, and are made of silk. The trousers, made quite full and long, are called *hakama*, and are worn by little girls of the higher classes. Besides these, a garment called the *haori* is on some occasions worn over the kimono by both sexes. It has a cut similar to the kimono, but is shorter, and is not confined by the girdle. All Japanese garments are usually fastened with strings or cords, generally of silk — buttons, buckles, hooks and eyes being found mainly on Western garments.

The child's *obi*, or girdle, is at first narrower than her mother's, but is made wider and longer as she grows older. Sometimes it is a foot broad. There are factories devoted exclusively to obi-weaving, and masterpieces of beauty and elegance are produced. It is wound around the waist and made into a large butterfly bow in the back, the loops of which are, for state occasions, fastened up to the shoulders, while the wide ends float gracefully over the hips.

The sleeves of the girl's kimono are much longer than her brother's, sometimes even touching the ground; but this extreme length is displayed among only the fashionables, and in robes of ceremony. When at work, the sleeves are tied up to the armpits, so as to be out of the way. The lower ends are sewed up, and serve as bags or pockets in which various articles may be stowed away.

There is no special head-covering in the native costume for girls. Indeed, the mode of dressing the hair would not admit of hats and bonnets such as ours. There is rivalry among

Japanese girls as to whose hair shall be most becomingly and artistically arranged, whose girdle be most gracefully tied, and whose robe show the most harmonious effects; and they are quite equal to their Western sisters in the taste for personal adornment. The Japanese parasol is used as a shelter from the sun, and the European umbrella is gaining favor. For going out in the rain there are rain-coats and rain-hats made of oiled paper.

Tabi (tah-bee), socks of blue or white cotton cloth, are worn on the little feet. They are made like mittens, with a place for the great toe separate from the others, so as to allow the strap which fastens on the clogs to pass between. The clogs are made of wood, and have two little wooden pegs under the soles, high or low, according to the taste of the wearer, but in either case capable of making a great clatter on wood, stone, or pebbles; fortunately it is not the custom to wear any foot-gear besides the socks in the house. The single strap divides into two parts, which pass on each side of the foot and fasten to the clog. These straps, or thongs, on little girls' clogs are sometimes gaily colored. With but one fastening, it is an easy matter to take off the clogs when entering a house, and leave them on the veranda, and the custom is certainly conducive to tidiness. It is a necessary custom, for the clogs would be ruinous to the fine soft mats covering the floor.

Complexion is another important and interesting point to the Japanese girl, as well as to her American and European sisters.

The fans carried by little girls and among all classes are the open, flat fans called *uchiwa* (oo-chee-wah), while those carried by boys and men are the folded ones called *ogi* (ô-gee, g hard). The *ogi* are used even by policemen, who scatter crowds by striking right and left with this folded fan, certainly a more merciful weapon than the club. In national costume, the gentleman carries the *ogi* in his girdle or in some part of his dress, at all seasons except winter, while the lady carries the *uchiwa*. It is considered to be a breach of etiquette for a gentleman to appear with an *uchiwa*, or a lady with an *ogi*.

Girls share in many of the games which have been already mentioned in "Japanese Boy Life,"

the card games, puzzles, checkers, and such indoor games playing a prominent part; but in addition they occasionally take part in some of the outdoor sports, among which is kite-flying. In the game, played with kites, called the Genji (g hard) and Heiki (ha-kee) fight, young men and maidens contend, and then there is always a crowd of spectators to watch the com-

dren become very skilful in making these balls themselves. Sometimes the ball is merely bounced by the child as she kneels before it; sometimes she stands, and, striking it to the ground, whirls quickly around in time to strike it again as it rises. Battledore and shuttlecock is played in the streets not only by girls in twos and threes and in circles, but also by a whole



A JAPANESE LABORER'S SUN-SHADE FOR HIS OX.

bat. If the young girl with dexterous skill succeeds in bringing her opponent's kite to the ground, the applause is sure to be hearty and enthusiastic.

There are some games which belong to certain seasons of the year, and are played only during those seasons. Playing ball and battledore and shuttlecock, as well as kite-flying, belong especially to the first of the year. The balls for little girls are made of cotton cord covered with strands of bright-colored silk, and the chil-

family. Father, mother, sisters and brothers, all join in the game, knocking the shuttlecock from one to another; and if one fails to hit it in time to keep it from the ground, all the other players rush to give that one a light blow with the bat. Sometimes the punishment for failure is having a circle drawn round the eyes, or the face otherwise marked. The bat is of wood with one side plain, the other ornamented with the picture of some well-known character of history or romance, or of a singing-girl. The

shuttlecock consists of a small, round center-piece, painted or gilded, stuck round with feathers, as petals are ranged round the center of a flower.

The little girls, of course, enjoy playing at scenes in real life, and imitate successfully weddings, funerals, dinners of ceremony, visiting, etc. Like our little people, they sometimes "play doctor," and they can mimic pompousness

tened with scarlet thongs in order to receive her guests at the top of the steps, where she bows very low to each, but does not shake hands. All are conducted to the reception-room, which is usually in the rear, overlooking the pretty garden, the little clogs being first taken off on the veranda.

Each wears a silk kimono with sleeves touching the ground; a handsome obi, woven in rich



JAPANESE GIRLS DURING THE FESTIVAL OF LANTERNS.

and peculiarities of all kinds. They have children's parties too, for which the young lady of the house sends out invitations in her own name. Children, as well as grown persons have seals, and these invitations are sealed with the young lady's own seal in vermillion. The parties are given in the afternoon, and the guests begin to arrive about three o'clock, sometimes accompanied by servants. The young hostess puts on her lacquered clogs fas-

designs, is tied in a butterfly bow, and gleams of scarlet or blue crêpe are seen in the elaborate chignons. The girdles are gay, but the dresses quiet and harmonious in color. The guests are arranged according to well-known rules of precedence and etiquette, the place of honor being next to the raised dais at the end of the room; and all sit with knees bent under so as to rest the body on the heels. The little hostess, aided by an elder sister, or perhaps her



A JAPANESE ORCHID.

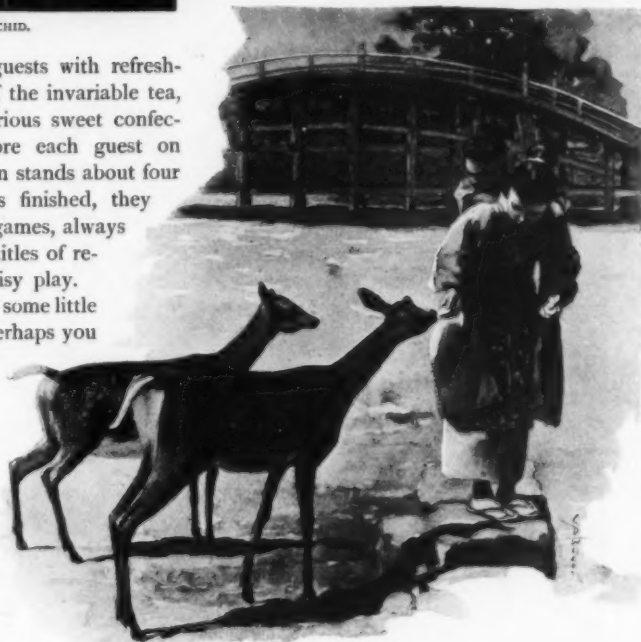
mother, at once serves her guests with refreshments; and these consist of the invariable tea, sliced sponge-cake, and various sweet confections, and are placed before each guest on lacquer trays, or little wooden stands about four inches high. Refreshments finished, they begin to play at quiet little games, always addressing each other with titles of respect, never lapsing into noisy play.

"What a stupid old party!" some little American may exclaim. Perhaps you would not think so if you saw them, yourself unseen, and could understand what they were saying. They play with spirit, and have a sense of humor, quiet as they seem.

As the Feast of Flags is the great day of the year for boys, so is the Feast of Dolls for girls. It comes on the third day of the third month, and is sometimes called by foreigners the "Festival of Peach Flowers," but the Japanese name is the "Hina matsuri" (hee-nah mat-soo-ree). The shops display for many days previous a fine assortment of toys suited to the occasion.

The mother adorns the chief room of the house with peach blossoms, which are in bloom at this season; the father buys toys for his little daughters. If the little girls are old enough, they prepare eatables themselves for the dolls, and give a feast in the evening to which the family friends are invited.

Another festival in which little girls take part is that of the Lanterns. They go together in a procession through the streets in the evening, swinging beautiful paper lanterns and singing as they go. Other people also form processions, and as the soft-tinted lights sway hither and thither, some showing beautiful transparencies of fanciful shapes, the whole makes a fairy-like scene. This is a "wishing evening," and whoever sees the meeting of two stars at a certain point near the Milky Way will obtain his wish in one year or three.



TWO PRETTY PETS.

There are no fairy-tales such as ours, but many simple story-books, nursery and childish rhymes, very different from ours, however, in spirit and style. Stories of animals, especially of the fox and the badger, abound.

THE END.

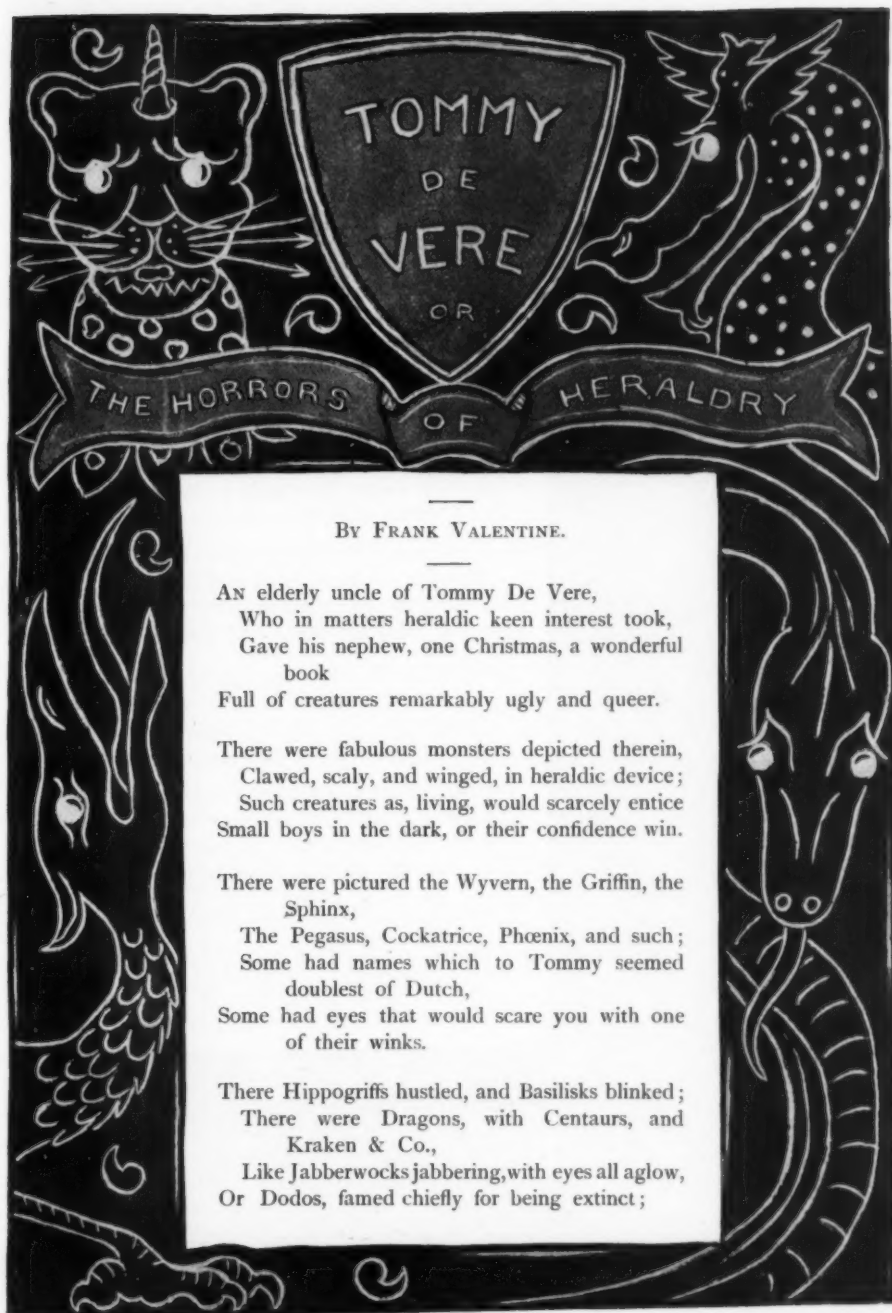
A DIFFICULT QUESTION.

BY WALLACE E. MATHER.

He passed his plate. "Oh, Teddy!" said I,
"How many times have you had 'more pie?'"
He thought an instant, then gravely spoke:
"I 'm sure I can't tell. My pieclometer 's broke."



"NOW, BEPPO, AS SOON AS YOU KNOW ENOUGH WORDS—WHY THEN YOU CAN READ!"



—
BY FRANK VALENTINE.
—

An elderly uncle of Tommy De Vere,
Who in matters heraldic keen interest took,
Gave his nephew, one Christmas, a wonderful
book
Full of creatures remarkably ugly and queer.

There were fabulous monsters depicted therein,
Clawed, scaly, and winged, in heraldic device;
Such creatures as, living, would scarcely entice
Small boys in the dark, or their confidence win.

There were pictured the Wyvern, the Griffin, the
Sphinx,
The Pegasus, Cockatrice, Phoenix, and such;
Some had names which to Tommy seemed
doublest of Dutch,
Some had eyes that would scare you with one
of their winks.

There Hippogriffs hustled, and Basilisks blinked;
There were Dragons, with Centaurs, and
Kraken & Co.,
Like Jabberwocks jabbering, with eyes all aglow,
Or Dodos, famed chiefly for being extinct;



Such were some of the things Tommy saw in his book
 As he sat in his room after supper alone,
 Little guessing how many the hours that had flown,
 Till at last at the clock Tommy happened to look.

'T was so late that he hurried to jump into bed,
 But curious notions so mixed with his doze,
 That in visions around him strange animals rose,
 E'en stranger than any of which he had read.

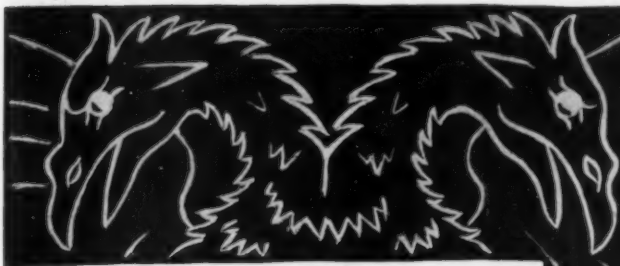
For dreams, with their usual exuberant sport,
 Running riot bewildered and bothered his brain,
 Poor Tommy, he puzzled, but puzzled in vain,
 To distinguish the shape and the size and the sort.

Like the "frumious Bandersnatch" there was a beast,
 And a Cyclops whose one eye was set in his forehead,
 Sea-serpents all squirming, and Hydras so horrid,
 And Harpies that hovered, or swooped to the feast.

He saw in his vision quaint Bunnigriffs run
 Up and down in some region mysterious and dim,
 While a Geegeewin smiling and solemn and slim,
 Would mock him with antics of hideous fun.

Now, when boys dream like this, things must
 culminate soon,

For the pace he was going was truly severe,
 Soon he sees (Tommy's spelling is not always clear),
 An immense *Amphibilious Hippo-Racoon!*



Then he woke with a howl, and sat up in his bed,
And, mystified, muttered and gazed all around,
And only grew calmer at length when he found
His mother's soft hand gently laid on his head.

"Oh, Tommy, my child!" "Yes, sweet mother, I know—
But surely 't would make any fellow cry out
To see Griffins grinning and beasts all about,
But I 'm sorry the brutes made me frighten you so!

"I was reading for ever so long after tea,—
And the book, I suppose, with my sleep disagreed;
But why Uncle Arthur should wish me to read
Such fabulous nonsense, I really can't see."

Said his mother, "My dear, looking back at it all,
When your wits are awake and broad daylight is
here,

Though still somewhat nervous you 'll smile at
your fear;

And, later in life, growing stalwart and tall,

You may read with a relish the tales that they tell
Of menacing monsters, and welcome with joy
Deeds of danger and daring. Remember, my boy,
Saint George and the Dragon. Good night, and
sleep well!"





A LITTLE BABY BEAR.

(A True Story. For Very Little Folks.)

BY LOUISE H. WALL.

IF I gave you ten guesses, you would use them all, and still not be able to tell me what queer visitor I had the other day. Do you

give it up? Well, it was a tiny baby bear. A hunter had caught him in the woods and brought him to town in his arms. As soon as I heard of him, I invited the baby to spend part of a day with me, and we had great fun playing together.

Long ago I used to have a picture of Santa Claus, a fat little man, all dressed up in a fur suit, and when I saw the baby bear I could almost believe that my picture had come alive. He had the same short woolly legs and fat roly-poly body; and there, too, was the droll, grave face looking as if he were just trying to keep from laughing. He came right into the house, as if he had known me all the three weeks of his life; and walked about under the chairs and tables, for he was no larger than a big cat. His little, pointed black nose went into everything that he saw; but as soon as he had got a good smell he trotted away and put his nose into something else. He seemed to be hunting for some smell that he had known in the woods, where he was born and had lived so cozily, snuggled up in his mother's nice black fur. When he got through with the legs of things, he went higher. Right up to



the tip-top of a great arm-chair he climbed, and hung himself across the back as if he were hanging himself out to dry. There he rested a little while; then, drawing himself into a ball, off he rolled on to the floor with such a thump that I thought he must have hurt himself. But he thought not, for without even waiting to rub his knees, he ran across the floor to stand up on his hind feet in front of my bookcase. He reached out one of his soft paws and patted the backs of the books, as if to say: "I like you very much, but I have not time to read you just now."

I am sure you would have thought him very cunning if you had seen him tipping about on his hind feet with a tiny yellow orange in his arms. He hugged it tight against his breast and set a row of wee baby teeth in the skin. But I did not catch a glimpse of his tongue until I gave him the hand mirror. The moment he saw the baby bear in the glass, a pink tongue, like a curled rose-leaf, came out and made loving little smudges all over the bright glass.

Again and again he lifted up the glass and peeped underneath to find the baby bear be-

hind it. I suppose he wanted a good hug beside the kisses; and I don't wonder, for he was soft and nice to squeeze.

When his dinner time came I gave him his milk in a bottle with a rubber top. When he saw it he reached out and whimpered for it, just as a hungry baby does. He stood up and took the bottle between his front paws and tipping it up sucked away so fast that soon there was no milk left.

Then when he saw that it was all gone he lifted up his little black coat-sleeve and wiped off his milky mouth.

On his way back to his home the children got about him on the street and laughed and jumped around him clapping their hands; but he seemed to like the fun and made them laugh louder by standing up on his hind legs and walking like a cunning little man. He wanted to stay out in the street to play some more when he got home, but you see it was past bear bed-time, and he had to be taken in. I am glad to be able to tell you that he did not cry at all as he trotted in and found his own little bed, that must have seemed nice and home-like, all ready for him in the corner.

SLEEP-FAIRY.

BY ANNIE E. TYNAN.

"HEIGHO, my precious!" sings little brown Mary;

"Baby is sleepy, and Mary is too;
So shut the white eyelids and hark for
Sleep-Fairy:

She 'll come with her dream-songs to
sister and you.

Hear her soft mantle among the high
grasses!

Hear the sweet twang as she touches her
strings!

All the winds pause when her fairy harp
passes,

And all the birds listen when Sleep-
Fairy sings.

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"Heigho, my primrose, the daylight is sleep-
ing!

Draw the white curtains across your blue
eyes.

Shut out the shadows that round us come
creeping;

For night never darkens in Sleep-Fairy's
skies.

See how the daisies nid-nod as they listen!
All the brown bunnies lie warm in their
nests.

Deep in the brook-bed the still fishes
glisten—

Sleep-Fairy sings while the busy world
rests."



THE LITTLE BREADMAKER.

BY BENJAMIN WEBSTER.

TAKE two quarts, one pint of flour,
 Fine and white as can be found;
 Pour it heaping on the sifter
 Resting on the bread-pan round.
 Of sugar add one tablespoonful,
 And the same amount of salt,
 Mix and rub them on the sifter
 Till all 's through; then call a halt.

Save one cupful of the mixture
 Till to knead it you begin,
 In one quart of blood-warm water
 Melt a yeast-cake smoothly in.
 Pour the water on the flour,
 Mixing both into a dough.
 Knead the dough for fifteen minutes—
 Some say twenty. Don't be slow.
 When the dough 's no longer sticky,
 Cover it, and say good-night.
 Place it where 't will not be chilly
 If you wish to find it light.

In the morning, you divide it.
 Make three loaves, and knead again.
 Let them rise a little longer,
 To the pan's edge. Place them then
 In the oven. Bake one hour.
 By that time they should be done,
 Draw them forth, and cool them slowly.
 There! Bread-making 's only fun.





TWO SCARES.

SHALL I tell you what happened
At Doll-Baby House?
The dear things were scared
At a chocolate mouse!

And the mouse in the cupboard —
A live one, at that —
Ran away for his life
From a Pincushion Cat!



Oh, a Batfish met a Catfish in the sea;
And he said unto the Catfish, "Sir," said he,
"You are no more like a cat than I am like a bat!
'T is a funny world we live in, Sir!" said he.

THE LETTER-BOX.

THE answer to the rhymed Charade, printed on page 595, is Her-ring.

EVANSTON, ILL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Your March number came today, and I have just been reading the story of "Denise and Ned Toodles" to my little brother. I read the beginning of that story in a number of 1896, and I wished that I could hear some more about dear little Ned Toodles, and I thought if my sister, brother and myself ever got a pony we would call him "Ned Toodles." Last fall we got a pony, but he was already named. His name was "Nig"; it is n't a pretty name, so when your last number came with the story of Ned Toodles in it we changed his name. His full name is Ned Toodles Marshall, now. I think that Ned Toodles in the story must have been very much like our Ned. He knows when you let the oats out of the chute and neighs in a deep voice. Papa says he has a bass voice. Wishing you prosperity, I am your devoted little reader,

MARY S. MARSHALL.

ST. LOUIS, MO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Hal and I have taken you for three years. There are three children in our family, Hal, myself, and my little sister Dorothy. I am thirteen, and as it is little Dorothy's birthday she wanted "sister" to write to ST. NICK. She looks at all the pictures in you and enjoys you as much as I do. Hal is too young to read, but he gets me to read all the stories to him; he is a dear little brother and Dorothy is a sweet little sister. As I am the oldest, mother depends on me to amuse the children, and dear old ST. NICK, if it were not for you I would have a much harder time amusing them. Hal is not easily content with rough games, for he is a delicate child and cannot romp much, as it tires him; but he is getting stronger every day and we soon expect him to be able to romp a great deal.

Your loving reader,

LILIAN ISABEL DUNLEE.

WEST CHESTER, PA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: West Chester is not far from Valley Forge, where Washington and his army spent the winter of 1777-78, and is also near the place where the Battle of Brandywine was fought, and the Americans were defeated. There is an old meeting-house near it, which was used as a hospital during the battle. A few years ago a monument was erected in memory of Lafayette.

Wishing you a long life. Your interested reader,

RACHEL M. DUNN.

PITTSBURG LANDING, TENN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Perhaps some of your readers will be interested in a letter from the famous Shiloh battle-field, which is now being converted into a National Military Park. The object of the Government is to restore it as far as possible to its original appearance.

It is a very usual occurrence to find relics of the war — as bullets, grape-shot, pieces of canteens, and others too numerous to mention. One day a farmer in plowing a field plowed up a gold ring, which was lost during the war, and which is now in my uncle's possession. It consists of three hoops which open and close. When closed it forms two hands clasped; when open it shows two hearts beneath the unclasped hands. It is very odd

and pretty. Another interesting relic was found in the bed of a small stream. It was a musket, in a fine state of preservation. The location of the camps can be readily seen, although it has been so long ago.

Ever since I can remember, I have spent a part of every summer on Lookout Mountain with my grandmother, who has a cottage about two hundred yards from the old Cravent house, near which the Battle above the Clouds was fought. This place has recently been purchased by the government.

Your interested reader,

LAURA McMILLIN.

MARIETTA, INDIAN TERRITORY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little girl seven years old. I live out here in the Indian Territory. We used to live in Tennessee, but came here to live with our aunt.

This is a wild country. They have storms here often in the spring, and "Lofer" wolves live in the woods, not very far off, and come into town sometimes when they are hungry.

Trees hardly ever grow in this country. We never see the real Indians where we are, here in Marietta. This is not a very big town, and there are not many stores in it.

There are lots of poor people out here, and the few rich ones own all the land. One man owns forty miles of land. We go out to "Sheegan," a little creek, to fish, but rarely ever catch anything; but we enjoy the bathing. There are just lots of pecans out here; we went out one afternoon, and gathered two bushels.

Your little reader,

MAGGIE TAYLOR.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have just finished reading the February number of your matchless magazine, and though my family has taken it for fourteen years, the idea of writing to you entered my head for the first time this evening. Though at present I am staying with my aunt in this city, my home is at Kavalui on the island of Mami. It is a rather barren country in the vicinity of the town in whose outskirts we live, but the other side is covered with palms, bananas, and agaves. It also teems with most beautiful birds and butterflies. But there are many dangerous insects, such as centipedes, though there are few people harmed by them. The town is built on the barren side because there is a bay there. It is a very poor one, though, being protected only by a sunken reef. From the summit of the island you can see on the horizon the peak of Mount Loa, from which a thin column of blue smoke is constantly ascending. On the other side can be seen the green hills of Molokai, the lepers' island. It is truly a grand sight — the calm blue Pacific and the islands in the distance. I think the Kanakas are awfully nice people, they are always laughing and singing, and their language is soft and pretty. They spend half their time in the water, and can swim almost as soon as they can walk. Sometimes you can see the shore strewn with brown babies rolling in the water. I spend a good deal of my time in the surf, too. We swim out to where the waves begin, and then we let ourselves be washed in on boards to the beach. I have a parrot named "Kamehameha"; he speaks Hawaiian and English; he seems to admire his name, for he shouts it all day long. Last year my uncle,

who is a lieutenant on the "Oregon," brought me a horse from Honolulu. I called him "Lio," which is the native name for horse. I am very fond of him, and I give him a bath every day in the ocean. I am collecting stamps, especially from Hawaii and the United States.

I receive the ST. NICHOLAS, which my aunt sends us every month, with delight, and read every word from cover to cover, advertisements and sewing-page included.

I am going to return to my island in March. Hoping this letter will be printed, I am,

Your reader and admirer,

GEOFFREY EASTMAN.

FLAT RIVER, MO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy six years old, and I want to tell you about my locomotive. I have a nice long track made of wooden ties and iron rails. My locomotive, with the exception of the wheels, which are iron, is made of wood and painted black. It is ten feet long, including the tender. It has a cow-catcher, fire-box, bell, water-tank, etc. It does not run by steam, but runs on an incline. Sometimes we make a fire in the fire-box just to have the smoke curl out of the smoke-stack like a big locomotive. The cab has glass windows in it, and seats on each side, and is large enough for two boys to ride very comfortably in it. I live in a small mining town and have no playmates, so I take my little dog "Gyp," and put her on the seat on one side of the cab, and play she is the engineer, while I shovel coal into the fire-box, ring the bell, open the throttle, and play I'm the fireman. Sometimes my mama fixes me a nice little dinner in a bucket, and I eat it in my engine-cab, and of course I always divide with my engineer. I also have a neat little box-car, which I can couple on to my engine when I like. The name of my train is "The Tady Flyer." We named it this because my nickname is Tady. We like your ST. NICHOLAS so very much. My papa thinks "Miss Nina Barrow" was a fine story for little folks. My mama liked "Master Skylark," while I like "Denise and Ned Toodles" best of all. I do hope you will like my letter.

Your little friend,

TAYLOR DRYDEN.

AMA, LA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have been one of your readers for quite a while, but I never have written to you.

I am thirteen years old, and I live on the Mississippi River, about twenty miles from New Orleans, among several fine sugar and rice plantations. I don't suppose that many of the readers of ST. NICHOLAS ever went to a sugar-mill, or tasted of the sweet, juicy sugar-cane.

We live on a very pretty place with great trees all around the house. I go to the little country school, about a quarter of a mile from where we live.

One of my friends wrote to you once, and you published his letter, which was about rice-growing.

I do not see many letters from Louisiana, so I hope mine will be printed. I will close now. Good-by to you and your readers. Your best friend,

STUART LANDRY.

MASON CITY, IOWA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken you for about three years, and have enjoyed you immensely. I will tell you about my home. I live in a large, square house on the bank of Willow Creek. I have a large toy boat, which sails very fast. We have real good skating here.

I take lots of pleasure in it. I have a wheel and am riding about all the time in summer. I am ten years old, and go to Sunday-school and Junior League. I go to the public schools here. In two weeks it is promotion time, and I pass into the sixth grade. I started in school when I was about seven years old. I am progressing very rapidly. I have a pair of bob-sleds, and have great fun coasting. I am interested in all your continued stories. I read a great deal.

I remain your ever-ready reader,

OSCAR B. MATHEWS.

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My sister and I have taken you for ten years. Just think! We do not think that you are too young for us. I believe we go over you about three times before we stop reading one number. We have lately had three or four years of your magazine bound; and in looking over the back numbers I found some very pretty letters from little French children.

My sister and I were born in Texas, although we live North now. My sister is at boarding-school in New York. When she came home for her Christmas vacation, she collected all the autumn numbers of ST. NICHOLAS and read and read, so that she could keep up with the continued stories.

Your loving reader,

PAM NOBLE.

COMPASS TERRACE, TAUNTON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My brother Gussie and I dearly love your jolly little magazine. We have read it for three years, and we think "Master Skylark" the beautifullest tale ever printed.

Our papa is a newspaper man and so is away from home nearly all day. One day in summer our mother took us to the "Shire Hall" for the afternoon. We were sitting under a tree when a rook flew overhead and dropped a piece of cheese out of its bill right before us. My little sister Margery, who is very fond of cheese, and not allowed to have it at home, at once toddled up to it, picked it up and ate it, although it was not very clean! She always thinks he brought it purposely for her. She is not yet three years old.

Gussie and I would rather do without sugar in our tea and milk on our porridge than miss your bright stories.

Good-by, dear ST. NICHOLAS. Your loving readers,
GUS and MAMIE McAULIFFE.

SAN FRANCISCO.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken you ever since I was a very little girl and am now in my teens. I am spending this winter at boarding school, and you are such a comfort when I feel homesick. My home is very beautiful and quite near the coast. From the tops of the surrounding mountains you can see the ocean and the towns for quite a distance, and on very clear days the Sierra Nevadas. I have four pets—a pretty black horse, a donkey, two cats, and a dog. The donkey is a very meek looking little fellow named Bismarck, but though he looks so gentle he has many of his namesake's traits. The dog is named "Sonny." He is a little fox-terrier and very bright. I remain

Your faithful reader,

R. H. M.

CHLUMETZ, BOHEMIA, AUSTRIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We are nine children: the eldest is a boy; he is called Feri and he is staying at the university at Cambridge; then we are half a dozen sisters: Glona, Margit, Sita, Alice, Nora, Hanna, and again two little brothers, Norbert and Zdenko-Radslaw. Papa is one of the best gentlemen-riders in the land and he has won a great many steeplechases; he has a large racing-stable and it often happens that he also drives race-horses, which is very amusing. I drove them myself and people find me very reckless. Our carriage turned over several times, which was very exciting. We are all of us riding and our horses took sometimes the bit in their mouth and threw my sisters in a ditch. We have also lots of dogs, and there is a black poodle called "Solo" which belongs to me. We have been living in Bohemia for three years, and before that time we lived in Hungary. I got your magazine as a Christmas present; I like it very much indeed and I think it so interesting. Hoping to get you many years longer, I remain your loving reader.

COUNTESS SITA RINSKY.

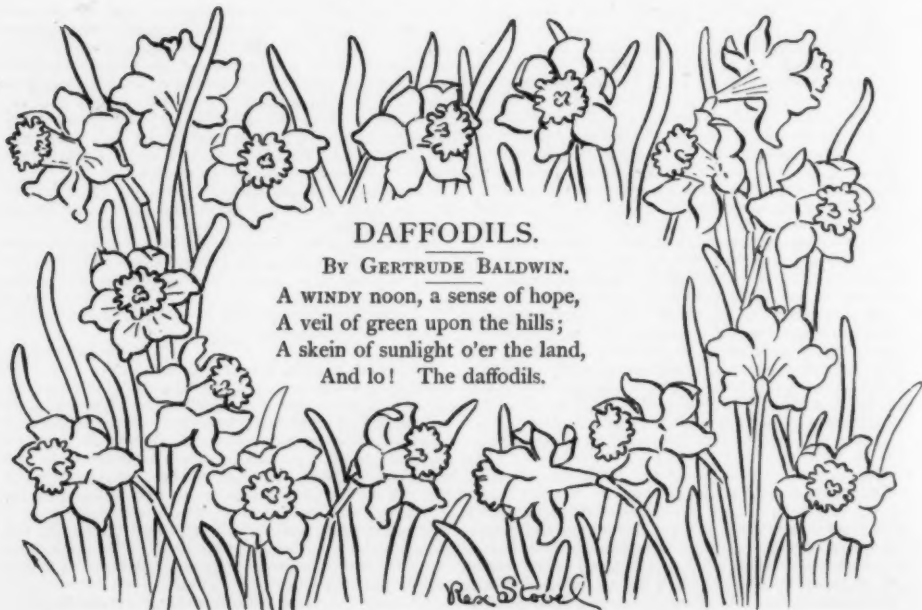
RIO, BRAZIL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Since my first letter was received, I will write again about Rio. The harbor of Rio is considered one of the most beautiful in the world. At the mouth are two forts, one on each side. It is full of islands, and is about $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles from north to south and 11 wide. On entering we see a tall rock or mountain that is called Sugar-Loaf, and another mountain called

Corcovado, or Hunch-back. The summit is reached by a cog-wheel engine with a car attached. Papa and mama once walked to the summit of this mountain, when the railroad was not yet built. The cars in Rio, except a few electric ones, are pulled by mules. Copa-Cabana is a long beach where there are many beautiful shells. The sun shines on it nearly all day. There are four large public gardens, including the Zoölogical and Botanical.

I remain, sincerely, your friend and reader,
TAYLOR BAGBY.

WE thank the young friends whose names follow for pleasant letters received from them: W. Fairfield Peterson, Anita H. Watson, G. Lindsley Burr, O. A. Homer, Jr., Louise K. Cowdrey, Anna E. Lisle, Mary M. K., F. D., William T. Pickering, Geraldine Gorton, Grace F. Packer, Granville W. Leighton, Jr., Ethel Sergeant Clark, Helen M. Shope, Celia Lewis, H. Dudley and H. O. Cowing, Bessie R. Peebler, Garnet G. Weltner, C. C., Alice King Potter, A. B., Virginia and Vivian Stuart, Mary M., Marion D. Reeves, Belle S. Hutchison, Hilda McElrath, Mary F. Gayley, Augusta Strohn, Agnes de Lima, Clarissa Pierson, Lucy Henderson, Cloe Lansdale, Chas. Buck, Anna Jump, Berinthia Wysong, Lucien Burns Johnson, Lillian Farrand Boynton, Anna Mitchell and Dorothy Dalzell, Carlos Mishler, Shepley Nichols, W. Platt Wood, Allen Smith, W. Kernan Dart, Hazel Babcock, Kenyon Hatch, James Camblos, Bessie Berg, Helen M. Rives, Janina B.



DAFFODILS.

BY GERTRUDE BALDWIN.

A WINDY noon, a sense of hope,
A veil of green upon the hills;
A skein of sunlight o'er the land,
And lo! The daffodils.



ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE APRIL NUMBER.

DIAMOND. 1. T. 2. Mud. 3. Manes. 4. Tunicle. 5. Decry. 6. Sly. 7. E.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Primals and finals, Bulwer Lytton. Cross-words: 1. Ball. 2. Ugly. 3. Last. 4. Wait. 5. Echo. 6. Rain.

CUBE. From 1 to 2, School; 1 to 3, sample; 2 to 4, locust; 3 to 4, Ernest; 5 to 6, pomade; 5 to 7, pencil; 6 to 8, endear; 7 to 8, ladder; 1 to 5, sip; 2 to 6, lie; 4 to 8, tar; 3 to 7, ell.

AFFIXES. Bob-bin; Nat-ural; Jim-crack; Pat-tern; Bill-ion; Kit-ten.

WORD-SQUARES. I. 1. East. 2. Area. 3. Seas. 4. Task. II. 1. Aged. 2. Gave. 3. Ever. 4. Derr.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle-box," care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER were received, before February 15th, from Josephine Sherwood—Allil and Adi—Nessie and Freddie.

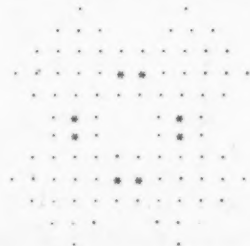
ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER were received, before February 15th, from M. B. H., 1—Lewis A. Parsons, 1—Emmanuel A. and Adine E. Hymans de Tiel, 3—Ethel Sergeant Clark, 3—"Three Puzzlers of Beekman Hill," 8—Tom and Alfred Morewood, 9—Jack and George A., 9—Paul Reese, 8—Elsie F. Pitkin, 2—Starr Hanford Lloyd, 3—Edith Gunn, 5—Alice T. Huyler, 5—Helen Ames, 7—Betty and Etta, 7—Abbot Augustine Thayer, 7—"Dondy Small," 9—Theodora B. Dennis, 8—The Helen Baird Company, 8—Bessie Thayer and Co., 8—"Two Little Brothers," 9—"Four Weeks in Kane," 7—"Rhoads and Co.," 8—Charles Burlingham and Co., 5—"The Brownie Band," 8—No name, Hackensack, 8—Morgan Buffington and his Mother, 7—William C. Kerr, 8—"Camp Lake," 8—Sigourney Fay Nininger, 9—Mabel M. Johns, 6—"The Trio," 5—Marguerite Sturdy, 5—"Three Friends," 3—C. D. Lauer and Co., 9—F. S. Cole, 3—Uncle Will, E. Everett, F. J., 5—"Class No. 19," 9—"Merry and Co.," 6—Daniel Hardin and Co., 7—Sumner Ford, 3—Emanuel A. Hymans, 2.

WORD-SQUARE.

1. The lowest deck of a vessel. 2. A river of Europe. 3. Cloth made of flax. 4. Burdens. 5. Pertaining to punishment.

ALLIL AND ADL

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.



I. UPPER LEFT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In rejuvenation. 2. A furrow. 3. A coin of British India. 4. The supreme Roman deity. 5. A large African antelope. 6. A common fish. 7. In rejuvenation.

II. UPPER RIGHT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In rejuvenation. 2. A sphere. 3. Odic. 4. A surname of Venus. 5. Without sight. 6. To conclude. 7. In rejuvenation.

III. LOWER LEFT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In rejuvenation. 2. The native form of a metal. 3. A fruit. 4. A noted scholar of the Carolingian period. 5. Occurrence. 6. The abbreviation for a branch of zoology. 7. In rejuvenation.

IV. LOWER RIGHT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In rejuvenation. 2. The juice of plants. 3. A feminine name. 4. A poetical name for Locris. 5. Measured steps. 6. A pronoun. 7. In rejuvenation.

M. B. C.

CHARADE.

A HAPPY first inhabited my whole;
And in the whole full many a first was found;
Nor first alone, but therein did abound
All things delightful to the human soul.

The first for second might have stayed in whole,
Had not the first a penalty incurred.
Now whole is hid, and only he who third
In faith may find and reach the longed-for goal.

But third have often blocked the way to whole.
A first of third, ill-used, becomes a curse—
A monstrous Frankenstein, a tyrant worse
Than opium, pipe, or cup or flowing bowl.

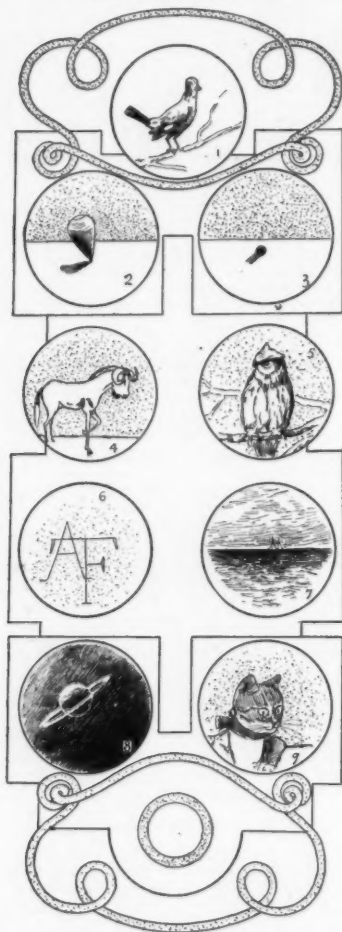
Oh, whole! oh, whole! a saintly bishop sings,
And heaven with the inspired anthem rings.

THEODORE F. COLLIER.

CONCEALED WORD-SQUARE.

"THE bell rang, Erasmus," said Mrs. Clapp. "Do come, for I want my dinner very much." In the dining-room a negro and a little girl, looking like Uncle Tom and Eva, devoted themselves to her until she asked for some more new milk, when they fainted. A. M. P.

ILLUSTRATED ZIGZAG.



ALL the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and placed one below the other, in the order numbered, the zigzag (beginning at the upper left-hand letter) will spell the name of a famous woman.

PRIMAL ACROSTIC.

THE words described are of varying lengths. When rightly guessed, and placed one below another, in the order here given, the first row of letters will spell the name of a man who has given great pleasure to the world.

CROSS-WORDS. 1. One of the great religions of the world. 2. Highly gifted as a speaker. 3. An animal

native to India. 4. One of the signs of the zodiac. 5. A great Carthaginian general. 6. One of the minor prophets. 7. A planet. 8. A grand division of the eastern continent. 9. A wicked Roman emperor.

B. D. H.

CONCEALED DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

WHEN fair and mild the finals smiled,
The primals crowned a happy child.

CROSS-WORDS.

1. WE fared of noons on pickled prunes,
Or cabbage-slaw, or macaroons.
2. At half-past one we took a bun,
Or osage orange, just for fun.
3. At half past three, as you can see,
We stood in need of toast and tea.
4. At four, I think, we mixed the ink
And vinegar I daily drink.
5. And made a sham of eating ham,
And Nova Scotia raspberry jam.
6. At six-fifteen, with one young bean,
We filled the smoking soup-tureen.

ANNA M. PRATT.

ZIGZAG.

ALL of the words described contain the same number of letters. When these are rightly guessed, and placed one below another, in the order here given, the zigzag, beginning at the upper left-hand letter, will spell the name and country of a famous king.

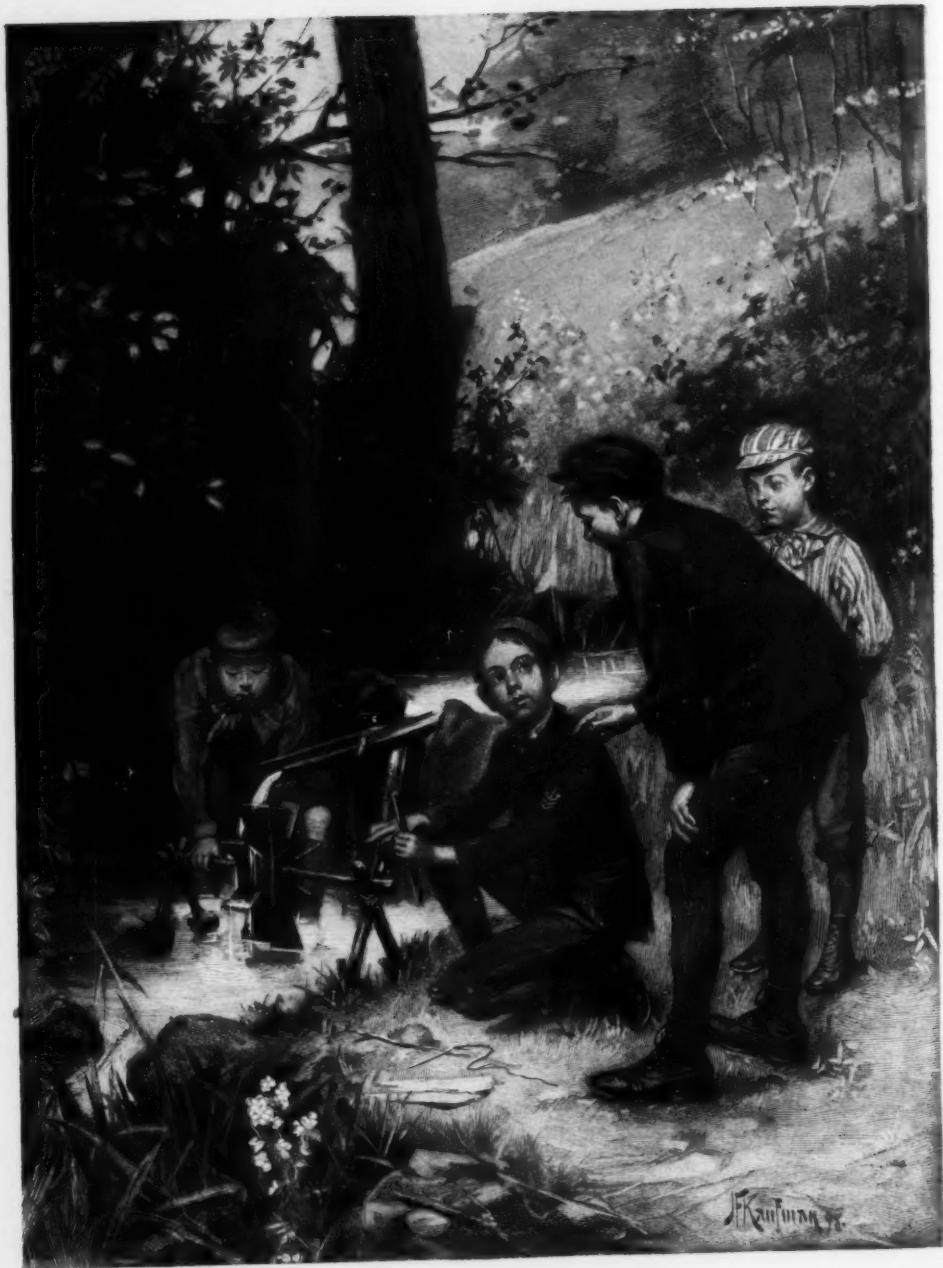
CROSS-WORDS; 1. A large American city. 2. An instrument resembling a large lute. 3. A thin, flat knife. 4. Harness. 5. A small but famous sea. 6. A kind of dog. 7. A reward or recompense. 8. To arrange in a suitable manner. 9. A plane figure having ten sides and ten angles. 10. Opposite. 11. Part of a ship. 12. A Greek magistrate. 13. A narrow opening. 14. A Turkish official. 15. The European house martin. 16. A pattern of excellence. 17. Enormous in size or strength. 18. Part of the leg of a horse. 19. To emit flashes of light.

A DOUBLE-FRAMED WORD-SQUARE.

9	10
.	5	6	.
.	.	1	.	2
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.	.	3	.	4
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11	12

CENTRAL SQUARE: 1. A shelter. 2. A tropical fruit. 3. A quarrelsome woman. 4. Incident. 5. Tears. From 5 to 6, estimation; from 5 to 7, a rampart; from 6 to 8, description; from 7 to 8, relating to Nestor; from 9 to 10, receptacles which keep food very cold; from 9 to 11, holiness; from 10 to 12, constancy; from 11 to 12, magnificence; from 1 to 9, to overlay; from 2 to 10, holes; from 4 to 12, ballads; from 3 to 11, circles.

A. C. BANNING.



WORK THAT IS PLAY.